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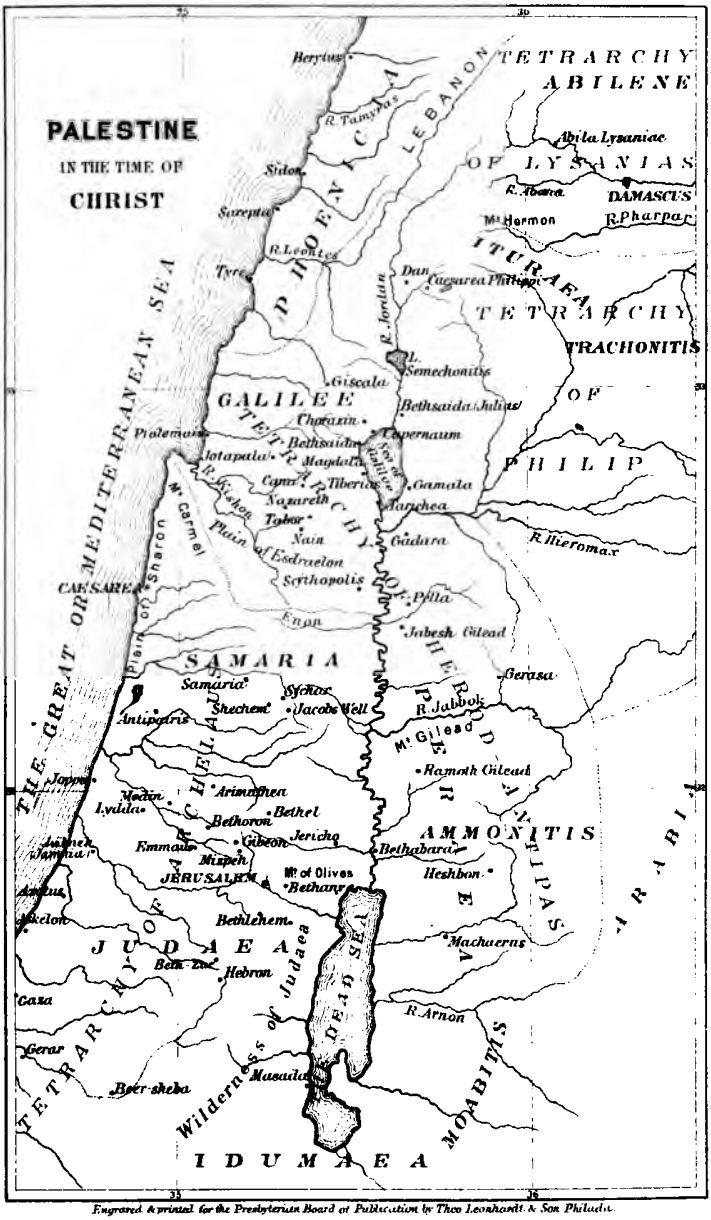
EXILE TO OVERTHROW:

A HISTORY OF THE JEWS

FROM THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SECOND TEMPLE.

BY THE
REV. JOHN W. MEARS, D.D.,
AUTHOR OF "HEROES OF BOHEMIA," "BEGGARS OF HOLLAND," "STORY OF MADAGASCAR," ETC., ETC.

PHILADELPHIA:
PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION,
No. 1334 CHESTNUT STREET.



Engraved & printed for the Presbyterian Board of Publication by Theo. Leonhardt & Son Philada.

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7-15-1924

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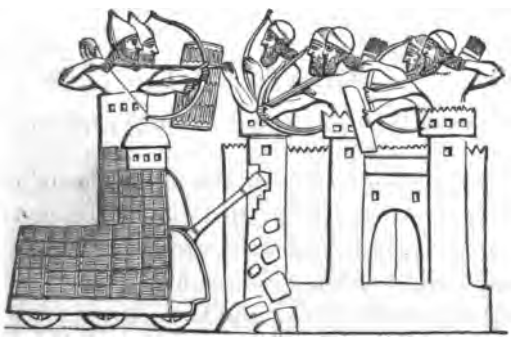
CHAPTER I.

CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM BY THE CHALDEANS.

IT was at midnight on the ninth day of July, 586 years before Christ, that the besieging army of the Chaldeans forced their way within the walls of Jerusalem. For eighteen months they had beleaguered the Holy City, casting up gigantic mounds and forts overtopping the walls. They had swept away all the pleasant country homes and rural retreats in the neighborhood of the city. A Babylonian chief had planted his throne in view of each of the city-gates.

All the horrors usually attendant upon a siege were suffered by the population cooped within the walls. Famine was followed by pestilence. The once beautiful countenances of the nobles became ghastly with starvation. The richly-clad ladies of Jerusalem sat down in despair upon dunghills, or sought from these foul heaps the morsels by which they eked out their supply of food. Little children with parched tongues fainted in the streets

with hunger or even became food for their starving parents. The one road which still remained open toward Jericho was infested with wild Arab tribes, Edomites, who rejoiced to aid in rendering the downfall of the city and the nation complete.



ASSYRIAN REPRESENTATION OF SIEGE-OPERATIONS.

Led by six princes of the king of Babylon, the Chaldean guards broke through the walls on the north, overpowered the night-watch, and, probably without occasioning any alarm, made their way to the middle gateway in front of the brazen altar of the temple. Here doubtless they encountered those who had fled to the temple as their last place of refuge, those who fondly hoped that the divine protection would make the holy house impregnable, and those whose office made it their duty to defend it with their lives. Indignant that the heathen should set foot within the sacred precincts, they

threw themselves with a last mighty effort upon the invaders, and perished in the vain attempt.

The noise of this conflict doubtless was borne to the ears of the king in his palace, whither the invaders had not yet come. Gathering together his family and his body-guard while yet the summer morning had not dawned, Zedekiah stealthily glided among dark and crooked streets to a passage-way or opening between two walls at the south-eastern corner of the city, which was not guarded as were the gates. Down past the royal pleasure-gardens, sad reminders of joys now for ever gone, the broken-hearted fugitives made their way. They descended the steep and rugged defiles through which the higher country breaks down into the deep chasm of the Jordan; they reached the plains of Jericho breathless and fatigued with their rapid flight over such a road. Could they have crossed the Jordan, they would, like David in his flight from Absalom, have felt themselves safe. But the Chaldean soldiers were upon their track. Jeremiah says they were swifter than the eagles of heaven. Overtaken by their pursuers in the plains of Jericho, the wornout and dispirited guards forsook their king and scattered in every direction. He and his family became an easy prey to the Chaldeans. In chains they were carried northward to Riblah, the head-quarters of Nebuchadnezzar, the Chaldean king.

The fate of Zedekiah exactly fulfilled two

prophecies which, like some other Scripture passages, appear to a careless reader quite contradictory. Jeremiah * carried a prophetic message from God to the king in these words: "Thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon." Ezekiel,† on the other hand, says: "I will bring him to Babylon, to the land of the Chaldeans, *yet shall he not see it,* though he shall die there." At Riblah, Zedekiah beheld Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonish king. He also



FROM AN ASSYRIAN SCULPTURE.

was compelled to witness the slaughter of his sons and his courtiers who had attended him in his flight; and then, before he was carried to Babylon, his own eyes were put out. He spent his life there, and worked, like a slave, in a mill, but Babylon he never *saw.*

* Ch. xxxiv. 3. † Ch. xii. 13.

With the fall of Zedekiah ended for ever the Jewish monarchy. Since the anointing of Saul it had lasted five hundred years. With the monarchy fell also the state. The history of the Jews as an independent nation was virtually finished. It had lasted from the crossing of the Red Sea, 1491 years before Christ, just nine centuries. Many, indeed, and fierce were the struggles by which the Jews endeavored to regain their national existence, but brief successes were gained only to be followed by more complete overthrow.

They fell and perished as a nation; their monarchy was overthrown; their land became the possession of strangers; they were exiled and scattered over the known world, as a final and deserved retribution for obstinate rebellion, idolatry and unfaithfulness. They became the most marked example among all nations of the fact that God governs the world, and that he will deal with nations according to their deserts. Having given express laws to the Jews, and having accompanied them with distinct promises and threatenings, it was needful that he should keep his word before all the world in their overthrow.

But while the nation fell, the Jewish people and the Jewish Church were preserved. In the darkest times there always remained a faithful few who kept up the ceremonies, who tried humbly to obey the Law and who clung to the hope of the Messiah. When the temple was destroyed and the chiefs of

the people perished in battle or were carried into exile, they were at first overwhelmed with despair and anguish, but the remembrance of God's promises soon restored their souls. Lifting their heads above the fearful wreck of their city and nation, they clung with unbroken tenacity to the hopes and prospects of a glorious destiny for the chosen people still preserved for them in the providence of God.

In fact, the great calamity which had befallen them exerted a purifying influence upon the whole people. Now, when their temple was utterly destroyed and the service could no longer be performed, and when multitudes were driven into exile and surrounded by idolaters, they abandoned idolatry as a people, and never again fell into it. Away from Judea they were more thoroughly Jewish than ever. Though all their external advantages were destroyed, they had a keener sense of their exalted position and privileges as a people than ever. No amount of suffering and degradation could hereafter suffice to crush these convictions, these aspirations and these hopes.

Other conquered peoples have become extinct or have blended indistinguishably with their conquerors. In early days England was conquered and reconquered half a dozen times, but the population of modern England is the result of the mingling together of conquerors and conquered into one people; and so completely has this work been done that no lines of separation can be traced

among them. Other nations when conquered by Rome submitted to her yoke, received her laws and language and became provinces of the empire. The prominent example of discontent and rebellion under Roman sway was Judea.

And now, when three thousand three hundred and seventy years have passed since the crossing of the Red Sea, and more than twenty-five hundred since the fall of the Jewish monarchy and the destruction of the Jewish state, and more than eighteen hundred years since the burning of the temple by Titus, the Jewish people still endure, their numbers probably twice as great as when they crossed the Red Sea, their features so distinctly marked that they can be recognized as the same race with those figured on the monuments of Egypt, their practices and feelings so peculiar that, though scattered among all the nations of the world, they are perfectly distinct from them all and show no signs whatever of coalescing with them.

Thus it is clear that while God intended signally to punish this people for its obstinacy in idolatry, for its unfaithfulness to the covenant and for its disobedience and rebellion, he did not intend to destroy it. He intended to preserve it amid the fearful calamities which it suffered, just as he had chosen and led it in the early centuries of its history by ways and methods so wonderful as to make it a witness before the world of his existence as a holy Lawgiver and a promise-keeping God.

CHAPTER II.

JEREMIAH AND THE REMNANT IN JUDEA.

A MONTH had passed since the capture of the city. Nebuchadnezzar was waiting at Riblah for news of the success of other military enterprises which he was conducting at the same time. But on the 10th of August the suspense at Jerusalem was broken by the appearance of Nebuzar-adan, the captain of Nebuchadnezzar's body-guard. He was accompanied by a detachment of the Chaldean army, and brought orders to put the finishing stroke to the work of destruction. The temple was committed to the flames; the palace and the houses of the nobility shared its fate; the walls of the city were thrown to the ground. The envious heathen from Moab and from Ammon gloated over the spectacle of Zion's humiliation, and clapped their hands in glee. Edom especially, the old enemy of Jacob's race, stood by and exultingly cheered on the work, crying out, "Rase it, rase it, even to the foundations!" The golden, the silver and the brazen vessels of the temple were carried away to grace the idolatrous festivals of the Chaldean conqueror. The great brazen sea or laver and

the lofty and richly-ornamented pillars of brass standing in the temple-porch, named Jachin and Boaz, relics of the times of Solomon, which had passed unharmed through all the earlier spoliations of the temple, were now seized, broken to pieces and carried away to Babylon.

Along with this treasure the Chaldeans carried off great numbers of the people, especially those of the better class, until the city was almost depopulated. Only the poor of the land were left to look after the vines and other crops. Seventy-one prominent exiles, including the chief and the second priests, three of the guardians of the temple, the chief military officer of Jerusalem, five members of the royal council, the keeper of the army register, were carried to the king of Babylon at Riblah and slain before his eyes. The first of this devoted list, Seraiah, the chief priest, was the father of Ezra the scribe.

Over this scene of devastation and woe Jeremiah uttered those pathetic lamentations which cannot even now be read without profound emotion. They are not unmeaning outbursts of passion; their great deep tide of feeling rolls along the channels of genuine poetry. They appeal alike to the tastes and to the sympathies of the reader. Most affecting of all the passages in the Old Testament, they are yet the most elaborate in structure of all. Can any description be more powerful than that of the fallen city with which the elegy opens?—

How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people!
How is she become a widow that was great among the nations!
How is she become tributary that was a princess among the provinces!

She weepeth sore in the night,
And her tears are on her cheeks;
Among all her lovers
She has none to comfort her.
All her friends have dealt treacherously with her;
They are become her enemies.

The ways of Zion do mourn
Because none come to her solemn feasts.
All her gates are desolate,
Her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted,
And she is in bitterness.

Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?
Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow,
Wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me
In the day of his fierce anger.

What thing shall I take to witness for thee?
What thing shall I liken to thee?
O daughter of Jerusalem!
What shall I equal to thee that I may comfort thee?
O virgin daughter of Zion!
For thy breach is great like the sea.
Who can heal thee?

All that pass by clap their hands at thee,
They hiss and wag their heads
At the daughter of Jerusalem;
Saying, Is this the city that men call
The Perfection of Beauty, the Joy of the whole Earth?

The five chapters into which the book of Lamentations is divided contain five separate elegies.

Each chapter, except the third, has twenty-two verses, corresponding with the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. Somewhat as in the alphabetical divisions of the one hundred and nineteenth Psalm, the verses of the first three chapters begin with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in their regular order, the first verse commencing with Aleph, the second with Beth, and so on.

The third chapter, with its sixty-six verses, is divided into series of three verses each; these three verses all begin with the same letter, and the order of the alphabet is observed as in the preceding chapters. In the fifth chapter, although the number of verses is the same, the alphabetic order is *not* observed. A French version of the Bible * gives the names of the Hebrew letters at the beginning of each verse, as the English Bible does in the one hundred and nineteenth Psalm.

If the question is asked why so much art was used in composing these lamentations, one answer, which is given by Isaac Taylor in his *Hebrew Poetry*, may suffice—namely, to aid the memory in retaining inspired words so well calculated to comfort and instruct the suffering people. They had comparatively few books in the best of times, and had to trust to their memories if they would occupy their minds with the ideas of others. Now, when driven from home, and when all their old

* That of Osterwald.

associations had been broken up and their treasures of literature destroyed, it was the more necessary that they should have all possible help in grasping and retaining any new communications made to them through God's messengers the prophets.

"The man who found a grave in any strange land, but a home in none, took up this word: 'Thy testimonies have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.' In the scatterings and wanderings of families and in lonely journeyings, in deserts and in cities where no synagogue-service could be enjoyed, the metrical Scriptures, infixed as they were in the memory by the very means of these artificial devices, became food to the soul. Thus was the religious constancy of the people and its brave endurance of injury and insult sustained and animated." *

The weeping prophet, who had long foreseen and given warning of the coming ruin, and who had offended the Jewish king and court by the directness and urgency of his speech, had been thrown into prison, and lay in chains when the city was taken. But by some means Nebuchadnezzar became acquainted with the character of Jeremiah, and felt a reverence for his prophetic office, mingled, possibly, with superstition. At all events, when the captain of the guard was sent to complete the destruction of the city he received a special commission to look well to Jeremiah, and not only to

* *Spirit of the Hebrew Poetry*, by Isaac Taylor, notes, p. 275.

do him no harm, but to follow his wishes to the letter.

So, among the first acts of the Chaldeans was to penetrate to the court of the prison where Jeremiah was confined, to take off his chains and set him free. Gathering together the exiles, they took Jeremiah with the crowd on the northern road toward the fatal city of Riblah. However, when they reached Ramah, six miles from Jerusalem, Nebuzar-adan, captain of the guard, drew the prophet aside and informed him that he was free to go where he wished. Should he choose to come to Babylon, the captain promised to look well to his interest, but if he preferred to remain, the whole land was before him to go whithersoever he pleased.

Thus a brilliant prospect seemed open to the long persecuted and afflicted Jeremiah. The liberated prisoner might hope to perform a splendid part in exile, like that of Daniel. Wealth and honor were almost within his grasp; but with a truly loyal heart he sacrificed all these prospects and remained with hope of doing something for his prostrate country. "He refused," says Josephus, "to go to any other spot in the world, and he gladly clung to the ruins of his country and to the hope of living out the rest of his life with its surviving relics."

Evidently, the first thing demanded by patriotic feeling was to rally once more the broken-hearted

remnants of the people around some common centre and to keep alive by all possible means the peculiar spirit of the Jewish religion and the hope of the coming Messiah. The people must not be suffered to lose faith in themselves as the chosen people of God, through whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Of all persons remaining in the Holy Land, Jeremiah, the inspired prophet, was best fitted to lead in this work.

Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah civil governor over the desolated country. His father, Ahikam, had been a firm friend of Jeremiah, and he inherited his father's regard for the prophet. His grandfather, Shaphan, had been the royal secretary under King Josiah. Jeremiah upon being released attached himself to Gedaliah, who had established the new capital at Mizpeh, an eminence within sight of Jerusalem, four and a half miles to the north. Here were gathered such persons of eminence as had escaped death or deportation, among them the daughters of the exiled king, Zedekiah.

Thus a degree of importance was not wanting to the nucleus now gathering around Mizpeh. The place itself was distinguished as an outpost of the defences of Jerusalem toward the north which had been originally fortified by King Asa. A high enclosed courtyard containing a deep well furnished secure quarters for the garrison. Here Gedaliah took up his residence. Hither from their various

hiding-places in the open country the scattered soldiers and officers soon began to gather, with Johanan, son of Kareah, at their head. Hither flocked the fugitive Jews from beyond Jordan—from Moab, from Ammon, and even from hostile Edom. Gedaliah received them with a generous cordiality, gave them his oath that if they would submit to the king of Babylon they would be unmolested, and encouraged them to gather in the waiting harvests of summer fruits, of wine and of oil. He also advised them to return and to occupy their towns and cities as of old.

For a time everything went well. Gedaliah himself was gentle and popular; his reputation for hereditary piety was great; he was the representative of the mighty and victorious government of the Chaldees; and he had Jeremiah, the greatest of living prophets, as his counselor. An affection for the ruined temple was cultivated, such as brought even Samaritan pilgrims with offerings and incense to his court. It is not unlikely that by a marriage with one of the king's daughters Gedaliah was expected to maintain the royal line. Large crops were gathered in, and the sorrows of the people began to be softened by the hopes of safety and peace under a foreign rule. But in the September of that sad year all these rising hopes were quenched, and a deeper darkness than before settled upon the doomed country. As was so often afterward the case, the Jews themselves were the authors of their

own calamity. A certain chief named Ishmael, described as connected with the royal family, had fled during the siege, with many others of his countrymen, across the Jordan, and had taken refuge with Baalis, king of the Ammonites. After the retirement of the Chaldees, Ishmael was among the first to visit Gedaliah at Mizpeh, but with no good intentions. He was willing to be the instrument of Ammonite hatred, which aimed at the utter overthrow of his nation through the assassination of Gedaliah. It is indeed supposed by some that Ishmael was descended from one of the Ammonitish women whom Solomon took into his harem, and that thus the sins of the great monarch after four centuries came back to plague his kingdom. Ishmael may have had ambitious designs of his own, and thus wished Gedaliah out of his way.

Johanan, another of the fugitive chiefs, and his associates had probably heard, while yet in exile, of the murderous plots of the Ammonite king, and when they met Ishmael in Mizpeh they divined his purpose, and instantly communicated the facts as they knew them to Gedaliah. The new ruler was of too generous a nature to credit the tale. How could it be possible that any one with Jewish blood in his veins, and royal blood at that, should cherish a design so fatal to the rising hopes of the people? Johanan insisted that the design was a fact, and in a secret interview with Gedaliah he urged that permission be given him to anticipate

and defeat the plot by slaying Ishmael. Why, argued Johanan, should he slay you, and thus scatter and destroy this little colony of returned fugitives, as well as the whole remnant of the people?

But Gedaliah persisted in his unsuspecting policy. A month passed. On the third of September, Ishmael with ten companions paid a visit to Gedaliah, and was cordially received and entertained in the governor's castle. The feast was a very lavish one, according to Josephus, and Gedaliah, the generous host, was overcome with wine. This was the opportunity of Ishmael and his associates. They rose and fell upon him, slew him with the sword, and having taken possession of the castle, they put to death all, both Jews and Chaldeans, whom they found on the premises. None escaped to tell the news, so that for two whole days the people dwelling in the neighborhood, being busy with harvest, knew not the calamity which had befallen the settlement.

During this time a company of eighty pilgrims from the North, including, what is very remarkable, a number of Samaritans, came to Mizpeh to pay their respects and offer their sympathies and gifts to the ruined temple of Jerusalem. Ishmael easily ensnared them into his den of slaughter, where he and his associates put seventy of them to death, and flung their bodies (as in the Sepoy massacre of the English at Cawnpore) into the well in the courtyard, until it would hold no more. The re-

maining ten escaped by the promise of a heavy ransom. After this horrible deed Ishmael felt himself unsafe in the castle, and descending upon the settlements he surprised and carried off the daughters of Zedekiah and their attendants, and made his way back toward the Ammonite country.

All this mischief was done at a time when, for some unknown reason, unless it were the necessities of the harvest, the men of war were absent from the castle and settlements. When they returned and found what had been done, they started with Johanan at their head in pursuit of Ishmael and his band. At the great waters of Gibeon—waters which are running yet—about six and a half miles north of Jerusalem, they overtook the robbers and recaptured their prey. The captives joyfully welcomed their deliverers, but, unfortunately, all but two of the robber band, with the chief Ishmael, escaped and returned in safety to the Ammonite country.

The melancholy death of Gedaliah and the subsequent slaughter in the castle completely broke the spirits of the people. Their leader was slain, the Chaldeans would be disposed to hold them responsible for the overthrow of the government, and they no longer felt themselves safe in Mizpeh or indeed in any part of their country. In the panic even the influence of Jeremiah could not control their movements. They pretended to ask his advice, but refused to listen to the messages divinely sent through his mouth. Against his

earnest remonstrances they set their faces southward, and returned to the country of their captivity, idolatrous Egypt. There they felt themselves safe from the wrath of Nebuchadnezzar; there they suffered themselves to be drawn into all the idolatrous practices of their neighbors; there, too, they fell under renewed calamities from the Chaldeans in the invasions and desolations of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar and Cambyses, which soon followed.

So the fate of the Holy Land was sealed. Two months after the conquest by Nebuchadnezzar it was practically abandoned by any and every semblance of an organized occupation, so far as the Jews were concerned. It is quite probable that the Chaldeans kept up some show of government in the land, for in the time of Nehemiah we read of Mizpeh in connection with "the throne of the governor on this side of the river." But from this time until the completion of the seventy years of exile the land was without a history; its life was suspended, and but for the wonderful power of the principles implanted in the Jewish mind, and the word and promise of God, we should have heard no more of Palestine as the home of the chosen people and the scene of the most memorable events in the world's history.

CHAPTER III.

THE EXILES IN CHALDEA.

THE remnant who had fled into Egypt soon fell back into the sin of idolatry, notwithstanding the fact that it was idolatry which brought upon the nation the chastisement of the Chaldean invasion. In Egypt they suffered for their idolatry the sore affliction of another Chaldean invasion. That under Cambyses, "the madman," was especially cruel and severe both to the people and to their false gods. The conqueror ordered the great temple at Thebes to be pillaged and burned. At the celebration of an idolatrous feast in Memphis he stabbed the sacred ox with his own poniard, ordered the priests to be scourged and all the people who assisted at the sacrifice to be massacred.

Amid such bloody scenes the Jews in Egypt vanish from our knowledge. Far different was the destiny of those who had been carried away by Nebuchadnezzar into exile in Babylon. While those who remained in possession of the land proved unfaithful to the covenant, those in exile actually saved and perpetuated the spiritual life, and thus secured the high destiny of the people.

The history of these exiles gathers about the persons of the two great prophets, Ezekiel and Daniel. Ezekiel had been carried away to the country of the Chaldeans, with other distinguished persons, eleven years before the destruction of Jerusalem. The river Chebar, on which he and his companions dwelt, cannot now be recognized. Some think one of the great canals by which the course of the river Euphrates used to be regulated and connected with the Tigris is intended. Nor is the place, Tel-Abib, known with any certainty. These exiles formed a little colony with local arrangements almost amounting to self-government. Ezekiel, who was both priest and prophet, was held in the highest consideration among his companions and was consulted by the elders on all occasions.

Five years after the beginning of his captivity his call as a prophet came to him by the river Chebar, and for twenty or more years he continued to exercise its high duties. By his visions and predictions he performed an important work in keeping alive the spirit of the exiles. The fact of his inspiration assured them that the God of Israel had not deserted his people. They were warned and rebuked for their worldly-mindedness, their false confidence and their unfaithfulness. They were instructed in the sins and the ill-desert of their nation which led to its downfall. In powerful and beautiful allegories, as in the vision of the valley

of dry bones and of the ever-widening river which flowed from the door of the temple, Ezekiel encouraged them to hope for restoration to their country and for the final attainment of the great destinies of the Jewish people. Such men, with such a calling, formed the strength of Judaism. Without them there could have been no recovery from the calamities under which it was suffering.

It has been claimed that a mutual understanding existed between Ezekiel in Babylonia and Jeremiah in Palestine—that they interchanged their prophecies, sending them respectively to Chaldea and to Jerusalem for mutual confirmation and encouragement; thus the people would hear responsive verses, strophe and antistrophe, as it were, of warning and promise. Calvin, in his commentary on Ezekiel, accepts this view, and compares the prophets to two alternate singers, each adapting himself to the strain of the other.

There is a curious conjecture, not altogether discredited by scholars, that Ezekiel, under the name of Nazaratus the Assyrian, was a teacher of Pythagoras. Ezekiel's tomb even is pointed out in the vicinity of Babylon at a place called Keffil. It has been visited for centuries by Jewish pilgrims, who believe that the lamp which is kept burning within the shrine was lit by the prophet himself.

The history of the colony on the Chebar ends with the record of Ezekiel himself. How, when or where he died we are not told. But the colony

need not be viewed as separate from the whole settlement of exiled Jews in Babylonia, which lasted as long as the city of Babylon itself. That great and magnificent city was the home of many of these exiles. Here doubtless much of the bitterness of their captivity was felt. Not held as slaves or seriously restricted in their personal liberty, they were yet strangers in a strange land. Here, by the river Euphrates, which ran through the city, they hung their harps upon the willows and sat them down and wept while they remembered Zion. Here their enemies made sport of their griefs, and in the midst of their tears demanded a song. Here they made those vows which held them together as a people, and gave assurance that whether returning from captivity or preferring to remain in exile they would be faithful to the hopes and destinies with which God had distinguished them from the other peoples of the earth:

> If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
> Let my right hand forget her cunning.
> If I do not remember thee,
> Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth;
> If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.

These early griefs indeed passed away, and more or less of contentment with their new circumstances came to be felt by the exiles. Especially would they be consoled when several of their number were treated with favor by the court, and were

raised like Daniel and his three companions, like Nehemiah and Esther, to very high positions in the government or about the king's person.

The prophet Daniel seems to have been a very young man when he was brought to Babylon in the year 606 B. C. He and a number of others were picked out, by order of Nebuchadnezzar, from the children of the king and the princes of Israel for their beauty and high birth, and were carried off from family and from home to be trained for places in the Chaldean court. That strength of principle and that toughness of moral fibre which have always belonged to the best class of Jews were early and strikingly developed in Daniel. No prospect of court advancement could turn him from what he felt to be his duty. His refusal at the very outset to eat the meat and drink the wine provided from the royal table was but a specimen of his whole character and career. He would rather face a whole den of famished lions than fail in his wonted religious exercises. And yet the general behavior of Daniel was from the beginning such as to win him the tender love of his heathen keeper. He used no vehemence in his refusal of the king's meat and drink, but by the force of persuasion and promise he secured the consent of the officer to the experiment.

Not often is such a blending of gentleness and courtesy with resolute principle beheld in the same nature. Such a combination was a grand element

of power, and was one of the proofs of the special divine presence which always attended this great man and prophet. Soon he was brought before Nebuchadnezzar, and showed that his skill as an interpreter of the monarch's dream was something far more than human, like the dream itself. The monarch, in fact, could not recall his dream; he had summoned his Chaldean astrologers to perform the unheard-of feat of recalling the forgotten images, and then of declaring their meaning. The Chaldeans frankly answered that the thing was impossible—that only the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh, could answer the king's demand.

But the true God was with his people in exile, with Daniel in the Chaldean court. In answer to the fervent prayer of the prophet and his associates both the dream and the interpretation were made known to Daniel, and were by him communicated to the wondering monarch and his court.

God had actually revealed to the Chaldean ruler in his sleep a symbolic picture of the history of the four great monarchies of the world, including his own. They were the Chaldean, the Medo-Persian under Cyrus, the Macedonian or Greek under Philip and Alexander the Great, and the Roman or iron kingdom. Three of these were wholly in the future; all of them were to have their day and cease to be. But at the last the God of heaven would set up a kingdom which should never be destroyed, but should stand for ever. All other

kingdoms must give way to this. It is the advancement of this kingdom which is the real cause of the downfall of all the others. As a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, it must continue to grow until it crushes them to pieces and fills the whole earth.

In return for these surprising revelations the king loaded Daniel with gifts, making him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief director of all the wise men, or, as we might say, president of the university of Babylon. His three Jewish companions, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, were raised to prominent places in the government. Thus the heathen conquerors of the chosen people were led to recognize in the captives a wisdom and a power superior to their own, and were constrained to admit that the claims of the God of the Jews to be the only true God were better grounded than the claims of their own deities.

When the monarchs of Babylon persisted in idolatrous demonstrations, and even insisted, with cruel threats and tortures, upon their Jewish subjects, high and low, conforming to the heathenish practices of the land, God granted marvelous deliverances to his faithful people, as in the case of the three companions of Daniel. Thrown into a burning furnace for refusing to worship Nebuchadnezzar's golden image, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego suffered no harm, either in person or

in clothing. They came forth at the bidding of the astonished king without even bringing the smell of fire with them. An act of worship to the God of these Jews was extorted from the monarch, and a decree forbidding any one to speak a word against this powerful Being was enacted and sent abroad to every people, nation and language in his dominions.

A touch of insanity may be suspected in the conduct of Nebuchadnezzar in this business of the golden image and the attempted burning alive of the three Jews. At all events, we have an account from the monarch's own hands incorporated in the book of Daniel of a dream which preceded and foreshadowed a long period of insanity, and of his feelings upon recovering from this attack. Six verses, doubtless from the pen of Daniel, are incorporated in the midst of the king's account. These supply what the king could scarcely have written—a description of the attack itself.

Daniel tells us that it was in the midst of a boast of his own greatness and power that the mighty monarch was smitten. While walking in his palace and contemplating his great works, the king exclaimed, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty?" While the word was in the king's mouth, says Daniel, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken: The

kingdom is departed from thee." The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar, and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.

Nebuchadnezzar says that it was in an act of worship to the most high God that he felt his reason return to him, and he closes by humbly recognizing the King of heaven under whose hand he had fallen, "whose works are truth and his ways judgment; and those that walk in pride he is able to abase."

The glory of Nebuchadnezzar was indeed enough to excite the pride of the unrenewed heart. Besides his military exploits, his conquests of Tyre, Egypt and Judea, he was the most magnificent of monarchs at home. It was his vast architectural works that raised Babylon to its highest pinnacle of glory. Hardly any other name than Nebuchadnezzar's is found on the bricks which abound in the ruins of Babylon. He it was who rebuilt the enormous tower which stood six hundred feet high and six hundred feet square at the base—an artificial mountain visible afar upon the plains of Mesopotamia. The very ruins of the tower at this day make a colossal pile, dominating the whole landscape with a gloomy grandeur. His too were the hanging gardens, built up in heavy mason-work, terrace upon terrace, seventy feet high, and covered

with soil so deep that huge forest trees as well as flowering shrubs could grow upon these artificial hills.

His also was most of the glory of that city which is regarded as the greatest of all the cities that the pride and power of man have built on the surface of the globe. The walled circuit of the city was from forty to sixty miles. It was itself a country, a little empire, enclosed within walls. Forests, parks and gardens were intermingled with the houses. The great palace of the kings was itself a city within the city, measuring seven miles in circumference. The main channel of the navigable river Euphrates flowed through the heart of Babylon; all the cross-streets coming down to the river were closed with gates. Unlike the cities of the Old World, and especially of the Orient, the streets of Babylon were straight and intersected each other at right angles. After the conquest of Asia by the Greeks and Romans this regular style of laying out streets was introduced into Europe, but it is in America especially that it has been most generally followed. Dean Prideaux remarks upon the Babylonian aspect of Philadelphia, which had only lately been founded when the dean wrote, "Much according to this model [of Babylon] William Penn the Quaker laid out the ground for his city of Philadelphia. Yet fifty-six of such cities," so wrote the dean, "might stand in the walls that encompassed Babylon." At the present time even

two or three such cities—parks, hills and rivers included—might be contained in the immense circuit of Nebuchadnezzar's capital.

The city-walls were themselves marvels of masonry, three hundred feet high, and broad enough on top to allow the turning of a four-horse chariot —a space of more than eighty feet. Beyond the walls the river Euphrates expanded into a lake large enough to be called a sea, on which floated fleets of ships and boats which had sailed up from the Persian Gulf, bearing the products of India and Arabia, and adding the stir of foreign commerce to the imperial capital.

It was at the height of the glory of Babylon that the Jewish exiles were brought within its influence, and it was over this great city and kingdom, the most splendid that ever existed, that one of their number became the second ruler. It was by the mouth of Daniel that the God of the Jews uttered such oracles as to shame and confound all the wisdom of the Chaldean sages, and it was Nebuchadnezzar, that "head of gold," the source of most of the Babylonian glory and greatness, who under his own hand humbly confessed the infinite excellence and supreme power of the Most High, and acknowledged and praised the King of heaven.

Seeing, then, their exile made a means of signally exalting the worship and extending the knowledge of their God, the confidence of the Jews in the

final triumph of their cause must have been greatly revived. They were consoled for their losses; they grew accustomed to their lot, and received with firm conviction of their truth the promises of the return from exile.

CHAPTER IV.

INFLUENCE OF THE EXILE UPON THE JEWISH MIND.

THE loss of the temple-service and of all the outward pomp and ceremony of their religious rites seems to have disposed the Jews to a more spiritual view of their religion. When all opportunity for sacrifice and offering was taken away, it was more easy to see that sacrifice and offering, of themselves, could not recommend the worshiper to the all-seeing God. When the heart and life alone could be given in service, it was not wonderful that men felt more deeply than ever that heart and life were really the essentials of all service. The effect of the great trial through which they were passing was to purify, to spiritualize and to elevate the religious conceptions and feelings of the Jews. It brought them nearer to God.

But this good effect of affliction was vastly strengthened by reaction against the idolatry and the polytheism of their conquerors. The odious thought of Babylonian exile and oppression was so closely connected with Babylonian heathenism that

the Jewish mind identified the two, and hated the heathenism as it hated the oppression of Babylon. The heathenism of the Canaanitish nations, whom the Jews themselves had conquered, the Jews were always prone to adopt. The deities of the surrounding nations with whom they formed alliances were a perpetual snare to them. By an evil enchantment they were over and over again seduced, now to the worship of Chemosh of Moab, and now to that of the cruel abomination of Ammon, the fire-god Moloch; now to the service of Ashtoreth, and now to that of Baal of the Sidonians. Although here and there idolatrous practices occurred among the exiles, yet for the people as a whole the enchantment of image-worship was for ever broken. The absurdity and the unreasonableness of paying divine honors to stocks and stones were never described with so keen a sarcasm as in those parts of the Scriptures which relate to this period. In the forty-fourth chapter of Isaiah the common sense of the makers of idols themselves is appealed to with mingled solemnity and disdain, and the question is put into the mouth of the idolater worshiping a stock which he himself has fashioned, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

The profound frauds, the utter hypocrisy and the pure selfishness and baseness of the priests of idolatry began to be better understood. The idols of Babylon were felt to be doomed. Bel boweth down

from the height of his great mountain-like temple. Nebo stoopeth, they stoop, they bow down together; they are but a burden, they cannot bring deliverance; they—once the badge of Israel's captivity—themselves are gone into captivity.

And along with this hatred of Babylonian and all other idols come higher, purer and grander views of the one true God. Too long restricted to the single nation of the Jews, too long unknown or despised among the great nations, the true God will proclaim his name and existence to all the ends of the earth. "I, even I, am He; I am the Lord, and there is no God beside me; before me was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength."

Brought away from their narrow and secluded country, and thrown into the midst of the most powerful and splendid people of the world, it is not wonderful that they were led to take wider views. They began to see more clearly how the influence and the knowledge of the true religion, instead of being the exclusive privilege of a few, might and would be extended to the whole race. The language of Babylon took the place of their own Hebrew. Not a different language so much as a dialect, called

the Chaldaic or Aramaic, now crept into their sacred writings. By this change their range of communication with their fellow-men was extended and enlarged. Their calendar, or mode of reckoning the year, was conformed to the Babylonian, which began in the fall instead of the spring.

They learned to look at the world's history as a great providential plan, including Gentiles as well as Jews in its divinely-ordered course. The dream of the four parts of the one great image — the head of gold, the breast and arms of silver, the belly and thighs of brass, the legs of iron and the feet of iron and clay, all forming one object whose brightness was excellent and whose form was terrible—as interpreted by Daniel, shows how the minds of Daniel and his countrymen were led to contemplate all the great events of history as parts of one great whole. It was the opening to their eyes of the history of redemption. All events pointed to the coming of the Messiah's kingdom. The weakness of the fourth kingdom, the mingled iron and clay, would give the opportunity for the appearance of the stone cut out of the mountain without hands. In the fullness of time it should come.

Thus the Jew saw in surrounding heathendom, as well as in the history of his own race, a kind of preparation for that great event on which he fixed his longing eyes. Thus, with a spiritual religion, an undying hatred of idolatry, a new language and

a widening of view so as to embrace humanity in his sympathies and his hopes, the Jew became a different person inwardly from what his ancestors had been.

Outwardly too he now was changed. His great capacities for worldly affairs and for merchandise, his power of accumulation, began to be developed. All around was the stir of commerce. Endless caravans, fleets of the desert, poured into Babylon, bearing gold and frankincense. The cry of the Chaldeans was in their ships. Sailing up the Euphrates and riding at anchor in the lake-like expansion of the river below Babylon were countless vessels from the coasts of the distant East. The spirit of adventure was aroused. No doubt many a Jewish boy's imagination was kindled by tales of these far-off countries, and not a few were persuaded to engage in the remote voyage, and perhaps the foundations of the fortunes and the beginnings of the peculiar commercial traits of the Jews are to be traced to this influence.

CHAPTER V.

THE FALL OF BABYLON.

JEREMIAH had predicted that the exile should last seventy years. The return was assured; he had no doubt of it. To prove his sincerity he had actually bought land and secured title-deeds which could be valuable only to his descendants after the return. "For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land."

This hope of return was the chief consolation of the more earnest and devout of the exiles. The generation who had been carried away of course could not hope to witness this restoration. But they communicated the hope to their children and children's children. They thought and prayed and sang over it until it became a part of their lives, their most intimate and precious experience. Of what avail were all the gracious promises made to this people from Abraham down to that very time, if this promise remained unfulfilled? As God was true, the nation could not utterly die, his people could not remain in perpetual exile.

Dating from the captivity of Jehoiakim, B. C. 606,* to the return under Zerubbabel, B. C. 536, we have exactly seventy years. Jehoiakim died in Jerusalem;† hence he was either not carried all the way to Babylon, or was afterward allowed to return. But Daniel and his friends, with many chosen youths of Israel, never returned. The beginning of the captivity is sometimes dated at 599 B. C., when Jehoiakim, son of the preceding monarch, was carried away. The destruction of the temple, 588 B. C., may also be regarded as the beginning of the captivity in an ecclesiastical sense: the temple lay in ruins for seventy years, and was not rebuilt until 517 B. C. It is plain that the prediction of seventy years, although uttered before the captivity began,‡ was fulfilled with remarkable exactitude.

These predictions of deliverance from Babylon were accompanied with threatenings against that idolatrous and oppressive power: "And it shall come to pass, according to the word of the Lord in Jeremiah, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, for their iniquity, and will make the land of the Chaldeans a perpetual desolation." "Flee out of the midst of Babylon," cries Jeremiah, "and deliver every man his soul; be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render to her a recompense. Though Bab-

* 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6; Dan. i. 2. † 2 Kings xxiv. 6.
‡ Jer. xxv. 12.

ylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, yet my spoilers shall come upon her, saith the Lord."

The avengers of Israel upon Babylon had long been gathering in the far North. Jeremiah's prophetic eyes beheld them half a century before they broke forth on the civilized world: "For lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country, and they shall set themselves in array against her." Nearly one hundred and fifty years before the appearance of these warlike Medes and Persians, Isaiah described their appearance and movements in vigorous and accurate language:

The noise of a multitude in the mountains as of a great people;
A tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together;
The Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle.
They come from a far country, from the end of heaven.
Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver;
And as for gold, they shall not delight in it.*

This is in accordance with the simple manners of these tribes. They knew nothing of luxury when they began their victorious career. They were an army of water-drinkers.

The very name of the leader of these Medes and Persians was revealed to Isaiah more than a century before he was born:

* Chap. xiii. 4, 5, 17.

I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come;
From the rising of the sun shall he call upon my name.
Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot,
Gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings?
I, the Lord; I am he.
I am the Lord, that saith of Cyrus,
He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure,
Even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built,
And to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.
Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, . . .
I girded thee, though thou hast not known me.*

This Cyrus, called Cyrus the Great, is one of the most famous persons of antiquity. The story of his childhood and education is given by the historian Xenophon, and forms a charming piece of biography, not always, however, to be relied upon as to facts. His name is thus a link between Oriental and classic ideas. Europe and Asia, Jew and Greek, were alike interested in Cyrus. He is the first of ancient conquerors who is known as more than a mere despot and destroyer.

After becoming king of the Medes, as well as of the Persians, Cyrus started on his career of conquest in the South. We read of Crœsus, the wealthy king of Lydia, attempting to arrest his progress. But this lord of money and territory was no match for the rude northern hordes who "regarded not silver nor delighted in gold." His kingdom fell before them, and Crœsus himself was

* Isa. xli. 2, 25; xliv. 28; xlv. 1, 5.

about to perish on the funeral pile when he was saved by the interposition of Cyrus himself.

In Babylon the reign of the magnificent Nebuchadnezzar had come to an end, and his descendant, Belshazzar, sat upon the throne of the Chaldeans. Whether he did not know of the close approach of the Medes and Persians, or whether he was blindly confident in the great strength of the city's defences, it is certain that while Cyrus and his army were diligently carrying on the siege, Belshazzar was feasting in the most lordly style. He and his courtiers knew that no army could batter down the walls or break open the massive gates of the city. But a divine decree had appointed Cyrus the destroyer of the Chaldean power, and a way would surely be found through the strongest of human defences.

The walls were not battered down, nor were the gates broken open, yet Babylon was taken. While the whole populace abandoned itself to revelry the gates which should have closed the river-approaches of the streets were left open and unguarded. Passers-by were too much occupied with the enjoyments of the hour to notice a gradual and steady lowering of the water in the river. Cyrus and his army had seen the weak point in the city's defences. They had dug an immense excavation or artificial lake near the river above the city, and by means of a canal were draining the waters of the Euphrates into this lake. Cyrus had stationed the remainder

of his army in two bodies, one at the entrance of the river into the city, and the other at the place of exit on the opposite side, with orders that as soon as the stream became fordable they should plunge in and march in its bed, and thus penetrate within the city-walls.

While these preparations were going on without, the royal festivities were at their height. A thousand Chaldean lords looked on while Belshazzar drank his wine; and as the fumes of the drink rose to his brain he sacrilegiously called for the sacred vessels of the Jewish temple, that himself, his princes, his wives and his concubines might drink from them. But as they touched them to their polluted lips, drinking to the honor of their gods of gold and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood and of stone, a strange phenomenon, a miraculous warning of danger, appeared. A man's hand was seen tracing mysterious and luminous characters on the wall of the palace.

The king beheld the part of the hand that wrote, and the joys of his feast vanished in a moment; terror smote his heart. "His countenance was changed and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed and his knees smote one against the other." Sobered by fright, but unable to decipher the words, which evidently bore a portentous and direful meaning, the king called aloud for his wise men of every class, and promised to the successful interpreter the third place

of power in the kingdom. The offer was made in vain. Whether the astrologers, Chaldeans and soothsayers had themselves entered too deeply into the prevailing festivities to be able to make use of their well-known skill, or whether a miraculous veil hid the exact form of the handwriting from their eyes, we do not know, but when they came they could neither read the writing nor make known to the king the interpretation.

The queen—probably the queen-mother, Nitocris, the gifted daughter of Nebuchadnezzar—had taken no part in the feast, and now, when she heard of the mysterious writing, at once bethought her of the wise man who had interpreted the dreams of her father. Presenting herself before the king in his consternation, she urged him to send for Daniel, "the man in whom is the spirit of the holy gods," and he would resolve the king's doubts and declare the interpretation of the handwriting on the wall.

The now aged prophet appears upon the scene, and is treated with the respect which wicked men in trouble often show to the good whom they have slighted in prosperity. The embarrassment of the whole party is explained to him by Belshazzar, and the reward of a high place in the kingdom offered to him if he will unfold the mysterious oracle. There is hardly a scene in all history so impressive or so grand in its pathos as that now beheld in this banqueting-hall. The venerable seer coming forth from his retirement and addressing the Chaldean

monarch fearlessly with words of kindly but severe admonition and reproof; the vast company of revelers awestruck and mute while they wait upon the words of one who alone can unfold the mystery that appalls them and reveal the secret of their fate; the reading, piece by piece, from the illuminated wall; the death-sentence upon Belshazzar and his kingdom—MENE, God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it: TEKEL, Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting; PERES, Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians; and the fulfillment by the doomed king of his promise of honor and reward to Daniel,—all this, as simply and powerfully told in the inspired page, is one of those passages which like precious gems never lose their lustre, but to every age and generation convey in vivid lines the great lessons of divine justice for the proud oppressor, and of divine care for the chosen people and for the kingdom of righteousness and truth upon earth.

The feast was over, and Daniel had received the royal honors and dignities, which he knew to be valueless. But the sound of the proclamation making him third ruler of the kingdom had scarcely died away when the shouts of the Persian soldiers, echoing from the river's bank, announced that the enemy was within the walls, and that the amazing strength of Babylon had quickly given way before the skilful devices of Cyrus. In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans,

slain. The inhabitants were caught in the midst of their revels. Overwhelmed with surprise, they yielded without a struggle; they were slaughtered like unresisting sheep. To and fro ran the panic-struck messengers with the news that the city was taken at one end before the other knew of the assault. So vast was this city, says Herodotus, that the distant parts kept up their dancing and merry-making for a long time in their ignorance of the entrance of the Persians. These rude mountain-hosts were fierce for the blood of their victims. They preferred to hunt down the flying inhabitants like wild beasts rather than pause to rifle the treasures of the wealthy city.

Ancient prophecies were fulfilled with marvelous accuracy. The sublime visions of Isaiah, of Jeremiah and of Ezekiel concerning the overthrow of Babylon came to pass. How hath the oppressor ceased; the golden city ceased! Hell from beneath was moved, the shades of kings in the under-world rose up from their shadowy thrones and seemed together to cry out, as the Babylonian king descended from his pomp to take his place among them, "Art thou become like unto us?" How like the morning star falling from the sky was the fall of this Lucifer, the son of the morning, cut down to the very ground! Exalting his throne above the stars of God, climbing like some giant monster and threatening to surmount hills, clouds and stars, he is cast down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RETURN FROM THE EXILE.

THE book of Daniel* speaks of Darius the Mede as succeeding Belshazzar upon the throne of Babylon, while Cyrus is mentioned only in the tenth chapter of the prophecy. Darius was an uncle of Cyrus, and is considered the last of the Median kings. He is known to Xenophon under the name Cyaxares. This uncle allowed his nephew Cyrus to act for him, and in fact retained little more than the name of authority, the reality of which belonged to Cyrus. At all events, the monarch who performs for the chosen people the grand work of breaking their bonds and letting the captives go free is Cyrus.

In the first year of Cyrus, says Ezra, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, to proclaim his devout and hearty acceptance of the divine appointment to be the restorer of Jerusalem. The joyful word went forth, not only permitting, but summoning and encouraging, all who might wish to return to the land of

*Chap. vi. 1.

their fathers and to build again the ruined temple, the house of the Lord God of Israel—Him Cyrus devoutly recognized as "the God."

Such a glorious event had not been known in the history of the nation since the exodus from Egypt and the deliverance from Pharaoh. Psalmist and prophet sang with new rapture of this, which might be called the second birth of the nation:

When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion,
We were like them that dream;
Then was our mouth filled with laughter
And our tongue with singing.
Then said they among the heathen,
The Lord hath done great things for them.
The Lord hath done great things for us,
Whereof we are glad.*

There are no richer passages in any writing than those which, in the latter part of Isaiah, foreshadow the blessedness and joy of the return from exile:

Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem,
And cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished,
That her iniquity is pardoned.
The voice of one that crieth in the wilderness,
Prepare ye the way of the Lord,
Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
And the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain;
And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
And all flesh shall see it together.

* Ps. cxxvi.

Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it.
Shout, ye lower parts of the earth;
Break forth into singing, ye mountains;
O forest and every tree therein,
For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob
And glorified himself in Israel.

Break forth into joy,
Sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem,
For the Lord hath comforted his people,
He hath redeemed Jerusalem.
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
And come to Zion with songs,
And everlasting joy upon their heads;
They shall obtain joy and gladness,
And sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The prophets felt that it was the opening of a new and a grand era for their people and for the true religion in the history of mankind. "Arise, shine," they cried; "for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

At this first call of Cyrus nearly fifty thousand (49,337) of the exiles arose and left their homes in Babylonia. Among these were—one reputed descendant of the royal family, four thousand priests, Joshua the high priest, seventy-four Levites, one hundred and twenty-eight singers, one hundred and thirty-nine temple-guards, and nearly four hundred descendants of those Canaanitish bondsmen to whom belonged the work of the temple-service. Over five thousand vessels of silver and gold were

carried upon the shoulders of these Nethinim, as they were called, but no sacred ark could now be borne in procession. That precious article of the tabernacle furniture, with its hewn tables of stone, its pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded, had totally disappeared, and, with its contents, has no more been seen on earth.*

Although a very large number of the exiles and their descendants remained in Babylonia, those who returned were not lacking in wealth and respectability. Over one-seventh of the number went in the capacity of servants with their employers. The property in live-stock was not small, embracing no less than seven thousand seven hundred asses, mules and horses—principally the former, which were the usual beasts of burden at that time—and four hundred and thirty-five camels. The horses, seven hundred and thirty-six in number, were the first which had been used for domestic purposes in the history of the Jews. Those who remained voluntarily in exile loaded their brethren with the most valuable gifts and contributions, including silver and golden vessels, jewels and goods of various kinds, besides furnishing part of their stock of animals.

* Appleton's *New American Cyclopædia*, art. "The Arch of Titus," makes the statement that the ark of the covenant is represented among the bas-reliefs of the spoils of the temple upon that monument. This is a mistake, as only the table of shew-bread and the seven-branched candlestick are to be seen there.

Like a triumphal procession the vast body of exiles moved out of the land of captivity, no longer chased, as at the first exodus, by their conquerors, or frightened at the perils of the journey and murmuring for a return to their bondage, but cheered and encouraged and aided by the liberality of a generous monarch, and roused to a high pitch of enthusiasm by the cheering strains of their prophets. No enemy attacked them on their way. The great desert which they had to cross seemed to blossom as the rose; no calamitous drought, no stroke of scorching suns, no fierce wild beast or venomous serpent, brought confusion to their ranks or delay to their joyful progress.

And the beloved land, the chosen centre of God's great plan of mercy and redemption to the race—how their bosoms swelled as at last its hills arose upon the horizon! Jerusalem seemed to start up from her stupor of seventy years, and to stand on tiptoe waiting eagerly for their approach. The good tidings would be heralded from the eastern-most mountains, and would fly from hilltop to hilltop, till expectant Zion herself would catch the news and proclaim it to every surrounding village and city. "How beautiful," would her watchmen say, "upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

As nearly the whole body of the exiles were of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, they naturally returned to that part of Palestine which had formed the home of their fathers, and where probably many of their kindred had remained after Nebuchadnezzar's conquest. The northern and southern parts of Palestine and the territory east of the Jordan were in the hands of unfriendly tribes, heathen, or, like the mixed race of the Samaritans, half heathen, in their customs. Everything connected with the history of the country now centres in this narrow belt, and especially upon the city, dear and venerable even in ruins. The inhabitants of the land are now known as Jews, the old names of Israelite and Hebrew having passed away. Jerusalem, too, from this time bears the additional title of "the Holy City," the name by which it is called to this day by the surrounding tribes, and the name by which it was known to Herodotus (*Kadytis*), the father of Grecian history, who passed by it in the following century.

The first public work of the returned exiles was to rebuild the great altar of burnt-offering and to recommence the regular daily and weekly sacrifices, the offerings of the new moon and of all the appointed feasts in the old Levitical service. From the first day of October, 536 B. C., the smoke of the morning and evening sacrifice ascended daily into the Judean heavens, once more reminding the worshipers that without shedding of blood there is no

remission of sin, and teaching them to look beyond the blood of bulls and of goats, that could not take away sin, to the Lamb of God, that would take away the sin of the world. With the feast of Tabernacles, too, began the regular observance of the festivals of the year.

Thus the chief and essential observances of the Jewish ceremonial law were restored, and the outward and inward religious life of the people moved forward in uninterrupted progress until its great object was realized in the coming and the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SECOND TEMPLE.

THE first temple, built by Solomon, had been destroyed. Every relic of that magnificent monarch's work above the ground had disappeared. But the foundations themselves, and especially the huge and firmly-fastened blocks of hewn stone by which the temple-area was built up from the valley below, were not disturbed, and are believed to remain to this day where they were placed by Solomon's workmen.

Upon this immense substructure, now nearly three thousand years old, both the second and the third (or Herod's) temple, as well as the Mohammedan mosque of Omar, have since been built. Here the returned exiles, with Zerubbabel at their head, prepared to lay once more the foundations of the Lord's house. There was no want of means for prosecuting this great work. The gifts of the people, both those who remained in Babylon and those who returned, were on a liberal scale. They are summed up by Ezra* as sixty-one thousand drachms of gold, calculated at $5.39 per drachm, and five thou-

* Chap. ii. 69.

sand pounds of silver, nearly one hundred thousand dollars more; and altogether they must have been equivalent to two or three millions of our money when the difference in purchasing power is taken into account. Besides these gifts, Cyrus had decreed that the cost of the heavier materials of the temple should be borne by the imperial treasury.

Hence money was forthcoming for the masons and carpenters, and meat and drink and oil for the Sidonian and Tyrian helpers, the descendants of the same people who five hundred years before had been employed by Solomon for the same service—namely, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea at Joppa, according to the grant they had from Cyrus, king of Persia.

Some time elapsed before the rubbish and ruins of the famous old structure could be cleared away. It was the seventh month of the year following the return that the foundations of the new temple were laid. The event was celebrated with appropriate ceremonies. Priests and Levites, with trumpets and cymbals, were set to praise the Lord, and the singers sang, using the words of some of the Psalms of David, or perhaps of some composed for this very occasion. As they laid the corner-stone they may have sung from the one hundred and eighteenth Psalm:

The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner.
This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

And as they sang and chanted and praised, giving "thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever," the multitude of the people assembled to witness the ceremony responded with a great shout of joy, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.

But among the crowd of the young and the middle-aged were not a few ancient men, priests, Levites and chiefs of the fathers, who remembered the glory of the first temple, and who could not help contrasting with that splendid monument the feeble beginnings of the new enterprise; and when the foundation of this house was laid, they wept with a loud voice, mingling their lamentations with the rejoicings of the people, so that it was difficult to tell whether it was a shout of joy or a cry of lamentation that went up from the people.

Indeed, the joy of the younger and inexperienced portion of the assembly was at least premature. Unfavorable circumstances speedily broke off the work, and the foundations lay twelve years awaiting the superstructure. The jealousy of the surrounding tribes was stirred up. The Samaritans on the north, a semi-heathen community, at first proposed to join in the work of rebuilding the temple, and when Zerubbabel and his associates declined an offer which could scarcely be sincere, and which, if accepted, would open the way to endless dissen-

sions, they resented the refusal and set themselves in every possible way to hinder the work. They secured the aid of persons high in authority under the government, and of residents in Babylon and Susa, and artfully represented to the king the rebellious character of the Jews, appealing to the records of his predecessors in proof of the fact, and predicting the entire overthrow of the Persian power in Judea if such privileges were granted to the inhabitants.

The result of these plottings was a decree from Artaxerxes requiring the work to cease. But it was only for a season that the generous spirit of Cyrus appeared to die out of the Persian royal line. Another Darius arose and sat upon the throne. At the same time the two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, appeared, to stir up the spirit of the people, who were supinely accepting their ill-fortune and falling into worldly-mindedness and formality. They reproved the people for dwelling in ceiled houses while the Lord's house still lay waste. They cheered on Zerubbabel and his associates to renew their labors. They promised that the glory of this house should be greater than that of Solomon's temple. Zerubbabel's hands had the honor of laying the foundations of the house; his hands should finish it. "Not by might nor by power" should it come to pass, but "by my Spirit," saith the Lord of hosts. "Who art thou, O great mountain?" exclaimed the prophet; "before Zerubbabel thou shalt

become a plain, and he shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it!"

The vision of these prophets penetrated beyond the present dispensation: "For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts."

Thus quickened by human and divine impulses, the people returned with new zeal and vigor to the work of temple-building. Nor did they heed the threats of their enemies, who now could accomplish nothing at the court of the king. On the contrary, Darius ordered an inquiry into the case, and the result was that the original proclamation of Cyrus was brought to light, and orders were given to carry out its liberal provisions to the full. The severest penalties were threatened against those who tampered with the requirements of the decree, and God was solemnly called upon to destroy all kings and peoples that should hereafter injure or destroy his temple at Jerusalem.

Under these new influences the work was again undertaken in September of the second year of Darius, and was finally completed in the latter part of the sixth year, about the month of March, 516 B. C.

The dedication-services and the feast of Passover,

which soon followed, were observed with joy by the whole people. A prosperous future was opening before them. Angels talked with each other, in the vision of Zechariah, upon the brightened prospects of Jerusalem:

"Jerusalem shall be inhabited, as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein. For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her."

The days of mourning which had been observed during the seventy years of exile were abolished. The fasts were replaced by feasts, to be observed with joy and gladness.

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion," cries Zechariah as he looks forward from this favored time and mingles with it the hope of the Messiah; "shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee, just and having salvation. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord."

CHAPTER VIII.

EZRA AND NEHEMIAH.

SIXTY years now passed, of which we have no record, and which we may therefore regard as years of peace. At the end of this period a new movement of the Jews in Babylon toward Judea takes place. A deep and friendly interest in the welfare of the people is again shown by the Babylonian monarch, Artaxerxes I. Encouraged by royal favor, two prominent Babylonian Jews now appear, to render the greatest services to their countrymen in Palestine. They are Ezra the scribe, a direct descendant of Aaron, and Nehemiah, the cupbearer of the Persian monarch.

In the year 457 B. C. Ezra determines to cast in his lot with the settlers in the Holy Land. But before leaving Babylon he secures from the king almost unlimited power and privileges; the king, he says, granted all his requests according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him. He commissioned Ezra to make inquiry upon the state of affairs in Palestine, and he and his seven counselors loaded him with gifts and authorized him to call

upon the Persian officers of the provinces west of the Euphrates for immense supplies of money and provisions; he forbade the exaction of toll, tribute or custom from any one engaged in the religious service of the Jews; and he gave Ezra the power of appointment of all the officers of justice in the region; their sentences upon offenders, whether of death, banishment, imprisonment or fine, should be executed without delay.

Armed with this comprehensive royal mandate, Ezra became a great power in the Holy Land. He united in himself the offices of high priest, chief magistrate, and scribe or doctor and professor of the Jewish Law. He was, besides, the chronicler and bibliographer of the national history and of the Hebrew literature. There is a tradition that he wrote down the entire Scriptures, so far as they then existed, from memory; to him is ascribed the present shape of the Hebrew letters; he is considered by many to be the author of the books of Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, and of the one hundred and nineteenth Psalm. There can be no question that the law of the Lord was his delight, and that horror took hold of him because of the wicked that forsook his law. The scrupulous fidelity and unselfishness with which he fulfilled his important trusts is shown from the fact that at starting he publicly weighed the treasures which had been contributed for the temple, and placed them in the hands of well-known and responsi-

ble men; and upon the fourth day after his arrival at Jerusalem the treasure was again weighed, and the weight put on record in the presence of four priests and Levites, and the whole then delivered to the proper temple-officers.

Ezra's principal work, however, so far as we can learn from the book of Ezra, was to call back the people from the dangerous practice of forming alliances by marriage with the surrounding heathen or semi-heathen tribes. At this early stage in the reviving life of the community, when all as yet was weak and uncertain, how dangerous, how suicidal, would be the practice of entangling themselves in heathen alliances! With such domestic establishments they must soon have sunk to the level of the Samaritans, and their character as Jews and as the chosen people of God would have been lost in the idolatry and the heathenish practices to which they would have been enticed. The grand providential purpose for which the race was chosen, to hand down the true knowledge of God and to bless the world by giving it the Messiah, would have been defeated.

Hence, when Ezra found that not only the people, but the priests and Levites themselves, had formed these alliances, and that the very princes and rulers had been chief in these trespasses, it is not wonderful that his grief and indignation were intense, and that he took the most prompt and energetic measures to bring the evil to an end.

He rent his garments, plucked off the hair of his head and of his beard and sat down upon the ground. He scarcely ventured to open his mouth in prayer. "O my God," he cried, "I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God. After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this; should we again break thy commandments and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? Wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping?"

The vehemence of Ezra's manner, joined to his great authority, awed the offenders, and drew the mass of the people in sympathy around him. Some of the guilty parties now confessed their sins, and encouraged Ezra to go forward in any measures that were necessary for suppressing the evil. A proclamation was accordingly issued, requiring the appearance of the entire Jewish community within three days at Jerusalem, upon pain of forfeiture of possessions and of excommunication from the congregation. The call was universally obeyed. The assembly, trembling with fear, was still more deeply depressed by torrents of rain. Everything which Ezra demanded was granted. "As thou hast said, so must we do," was the response.

The rulers of the whole congregation were ap-

pointed a board or commission of inquiry, and it was agreed that the guilty parties should appear before them attended by the elders and the judges of their respective cities, and should in that public manner renounce the unlawful alliances which they had formed.

After carrying through this important reform, Ezra in all probability returned to Babylon for a season. Some years afterward he appears at Jerusalem and inaugurates the custom, which has continued in the Jewish and Christian churches down to the present day, of making the word of God the basis of public worship. To this reading he added the work of interpretation, so that he may be regarded as the first regular preacher of the word and the founder of the science of homiletics.

The first exercise of this kind of which we read was held in the open air. Ezra was elevated upon a wooden stand or pulpit containing twelve other persons. As he opened the parchment roll the whole assembly rose and maintained a standing position during all the services. He began with a short prayer; he blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen! amen!" lifting up their hands; and "they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord, with their faces to the ground. So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense and caused them to understand the reading."

Surely this was a great step in advance of the

old temple-services. Those were mainly addressed to the eye; they were made up of types, impressive, full of meaning, yet vague and for the most part left by themselves, without comment or explanation, to be understood or not by the worshiper. Here is the beginning of one of the peculiar institutions of the true religion, the reading and expounding of the law of God. It marks to-day the difference between heathenism and Christianity and between Romanism and Protestantism, that the former alike depend upon visible shows and ceremonies, upon splendid architecture, processions, rich dresses and banners, while the latter relies upon the written and spoken word. Protestant Christianity depends upon the Bible, the pulpit and the religious press.

Meanwhile, Jerusalem, important as the centre of the rising hopes of the people, and now doubly dear since the temple had been rebuilt and all the regular services of the house of God renewed, was utterly defenceless against foreign attack. The wall still lay in ruins, as the army of the Chaldeans had left it. And though a Chaldean army would not again march against the city, the surrounding tribes were fierce, hostile and jealous of its advantages. A city without high walls and barred gates in those times and countries was scarcely a city at all.

Among the Jews elevated to high positions at the Babylonian court was Nehemiah, the king's

cupbearer. His office brought him into familiar and daily intercourse with the sovereign. For four long months he had inwardly bewailed the defenceless condition of the city of his fathers, until at length a noticeable change came over his countenance, and the king kindly questioned his servant as to the cause. "Why is thy countenance sad," he asked, "seeing thou art not sick? This is nothing else but sorrow of heart."

The result was, that Nehemiah was allowed to go to Jerusalem, armed with the usual generous commissions which Eastern monarchs grant to their favorites, so that whatever material he needed for the work of restoring the walls and fortifications of the city might be forthcoming.

On the third night after his arrival in Jerusalem, accompanied by a few associates, he rode out by moonlight and made a tour of the city-walls. He planned this excursion for the night, and kept his purpose even from the rulers and priests, for he was aware of the bitter feeling of the surrounding heathen, who would be sure to resist his project as soon as it was known. He knew, too, that there was treachery within as well as hostility without the city. But after he had fully informed himself and had laid all his plans, he took hold of the work with an energy and a consecration that carried everything before them. The whole community rose up as one man; "the people had a mind to work."

The whole work was portioned out among various divisions of the people. Many of these working-parties came from the surrounding country. The priests, as was appropriate, took the lead, beginning on the eastern side of the city, at the sheep-gate, just north of the temple-area. Next to the priests builded the men of Jericho. Working-parties from Gibeon, from Mizpeh, from Tekoah and other villages rendered efficient help. The inhabitants of Zanoah set up a gate and built a thousand cubits of the western wall. The Tekoites took two divisions of the work—one on the north and one on the south-eastern part of the wall. Many individuals chose such portions of the wall as lay nearest to their own dwellings. Besides their united work, each priest builded over against his own house. Shallum, a leading city official, was aided by his daughters.

Their enemies of the surrounding tribes, neither few nor weak, ridiculed and threatened the wall-builders, who strengthened themselves by prayer and at the same time armed themselves with swords, spears, and bows. They remembered the Lord, the great and terrible. They resolved to fight for their families and homes. They were divided into two companies, half for work and half armed for defence. Even the working-parties went armed, some working with one hand and holding a weapon with the other. Nehemiah had by his side a trumpeter to give the signal for rallying the separated

companies at any point where they might be attacked; "our God," he said, "will fight for us." He also required all to remain within the city by night, to guard against surprises by the enemy.

Disheartened by these precautions, Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabians and the Ammonites gave up the struggle. They were compelled to look on while the walls steadily rose and were joined together, part to part, until no breach was left. They made vain efforts to call Nehemiah off from his great work and to entice him into their snares. He turned aside to no other duty or occupation until the wall was completed, smiling at threats of personal violence.

On the twenty-fifth day of September the wall was completed—in fifty-two days, a marvelously short space of time. Yet, as the labor was divided among not less than forty working-parties, the result cannot be regarded as beyond human power, especially when impelled by the most intense and urgent motives.

The completed walls were dedicated by a religious ceremony The princes of Judah and the Levites gathered from all places around Jerusalem. The sons of the singers, who had built themselves villages in the vicinity of the Holy City, the priests and the sons of the priests, were summoned to the dedication. Two great processions were formed upon the walls. One, led by Ezra, went in one direction, and the other, by Nehemiah, in the other.

As they traversed the new-made walls, the pledge of Jerusalem's security, they sang and rejoiced with so loud a voice, their wives and children joining in the song, that the joy of Jerusalem was heard a great way off.

Nehemiah also looked after the general and spiritual interests of the community. He put an end to the sabbath-day work and traffic, which, as a natural result of the heathenish alliances, had begun to be prevalent in and about the city. Now that the city was supplied with walls and gates, he could shut out the traders in wine, grapes, figs, grain, fish and all manner of wares, who previously had free access on the Lord's Day. And when they persisted in hanging about outside the closed gates, he drove them away and completely broke up the traffic.

He followed up the work of Ezra in dissolving the unholy alliances which the Jews still persisted in forming with the families of the surrounding heathen. An amazing example of this perverseness was given by the high priest Eliashib. While it does not appear that he had contracted any marriage with these people, he had formed some kind of alliance with Tobiah the Ammonite, and had even provided a lodging for him in the great tithe-chamber of the temple. But a grandson of Eliashib went a step farther and actually contracted marriage with the daughter of Sanballat, the leader of the Samaritan and heathen opposition to the

prosperity of Jerusalem. Such audacious treachery in high places, if persisted in, must lead to the utter overthrow of the Jewish cause. Nehemiah, who was absent in Persia at the time, no sooner returned than he expelled the miserable Ammonite intruder from the sacred precincts, turned all his household stuff out of doors, and ordered the desecrated chamber to be cleansed and once more put to use as a storehouse of tithes for the temple-service. With the son-in-law of Sanballat he was unable to do more than to expel him from his presence and forbid his performance of the duties of the priesthood.

A very important measure accomplished by Nehemiah was the release of the impoverished people from the great burden of debts which the masses had incurred to their wealthier brethren. Compelled to borrow money to buy provisions and to pay the Persian tribute, they had been charged twelve per cent. interest, and had consequently not only mortgaged farms, vineyards and houses, but had given up their children into hopeless servitude. At a time like this, when every effort of generous zeal was necessary to preserve and perpetuate the Jewish people and to hand down their institutions and their precious treasure of truth to future generations, Nehemiah felt it necessary to rebuke the grasping selfishness of the wealthier classes. He himself had acted in an exactly contrary spirit. He had expended large sums in liberating his coun-

trymen who had been sold as bondmen to the heathen. It was a burning shame that their own brethren at home should reduce them to slavery. He summoned a great assembly, and called upon the nobles and the rulers to renounce and cancel the claims which they held against their brethren, and even to pay back the extravagant interest-money, which under the law of Moses they could legally exact from Gentiles, but not from their own people.

As the necessity of the case was clear, and as Nehemiah demanded nothing which he himself was not willing to do, he readily gained the assent of the creditors of the people. They bound themselves on the spot by an oath that they would do all that was required of them. The delight of the people at this free-will act of relief was expressed by public thanksgiving and a shout of "Amen." And Nehemiah put it upon record that the creditors fulfilled their vow.

Under such wise, energetic and beneficent rulers and guides as Ezra and Nehemiah the dangers which threatened the beginnings of the new period of Jewish history were averted. Causes of strife were removed. The purity of the people as a peculiar and chosen race was preserved from contamination. The temple and the walls were built and the regularity of the temple-services provided for. Jerusalem arose once more to something of its ancient dignity and security. The sabbath was res-

cued from desecration, and the public reading and exposition of the word of God were made part of the religious worship of the people. All these were grand and essential elements in the structure of the new community.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DISPERSION.

BUT doubtless the great body of the exiles remained behind in the land of their captivity. They were weaned from the country which they had never seen, and which was personally known only to a generation that had nearly all passed away before the way was opened by Cyrus for their return. The fifty thousand who repeopled Palestine were only a select few, zealous for the fulfillment of prophecy and for the advancement of the divine kingdom in the world. Their brethren who remained behind for the most part enjoyed a good degree of prosperity and public favor. Daniel lived and died in the possession of almost uninterrupted honors from the Chaldean and the Persian monarchs. A Jewish maiden became the wife of one of these monarchs, and shared in the glory of an Oriental throne, and while in that position, by a wonderful coincidence of providences, became the savior of the entire Jewish people within the bounds of the empire.

This was Esther, wife of Ahasuerus or Xerxes, and cousin of the Jew Mordecai. An orphan girl,

a descendant of a Benjamite who was carried away with Jehoiachin, B. C. 599, she had been provided with a home by her cousin, who fulfilled to her the duties of parent and guardian. Mordecai seems to have held some position in or about the royal palace, and when it was given out that a new queen would be chosen he no doubt encouraged his beautiful ward to place herself among the candidates for this high position.

That peculiar power of captivating all hearts which has seemed to belong to the best specimens of the Jewish race, as in the case of Joseph and Daniel, was manifest in the case of Esther. She obtained favor in the sight of all them that looked upon her. And Xerxes, the splendid and imperious monarch, who had led an army of three millions of men into Greece, who had scourged the sea for breaking up the bridge of boats across the Hellespont, and had burned Athens, acknowledged the power of her beauty and the simplicity and sweetness of her character, and loved her with a true affection. He set the royal crown upon her head and made a feast, "even Esther's feast," to all his princes and his servants, in celebration of the marriage. He released the provinces from their year's tribute and scattered abroad magnificent gifts, such as became the wealth of so grand a ruler.

At the court of Xerxes there was also an enemy of the Jewish race in the person of Haman, called the Agagite, a descendant of that hostile tribe of

Amalekites that waylaid the people of Israel on their journey from Egypt to the Promised Land, and compelled them to fight their first battle. The old, hereditary hatred of the Jews, always ready to burst forth, was kindled in Haman's breast by the refusal of Mordecai to render him that almost idolatrous homage to which a court favorite in the East felt himself entitled, and which indeed the king had expressly commanded should be given to Haman.

Incensed at the persistent refusal of Mordecai, Haman plotted a stupendous act of revenge. He "thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone," but with the spirit of an Amalekite he proposed to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus. He cast lots—called *purim* in the Persian language—to decide when the massacre should take place. It was one of the many striking providences occurring in this history that the lot fell at the distance of almost the entire year, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, Adar, corresponding to our month of March.

With the easy indifference of an Oriental despot, Xerxes gave the royal assent to the plot of his favorite, Haman, and even refused the enormous bounty—computed at ten millions of dollars—which Haman offered to pay into the king's treasury in return for the horrible privilege of butchering the king's subjects. No doubt Haman counted

on gathering an immense spoil in connection with this indiscriminate slaughter, which was not to leave a single Jew, man, woman or child, alive.

In the widespread mourning which this edict caused among the Jews, Queen Esther did not share. The news which had spread like wild-fire through all the provinces had not penetrated to the women's apartments of the palace. Learning that her cousin Mordecai was in mourning and not permitted to enter the palace, she inquired into the matter, and thus the whole dreadful story came to her ears. What should she do? To go to the king at once and plead for her people was the most natural impulse, but no one, not even the queen, dare go without being summoned, and it was now thirty days since she had been called into the royal presence.

Mordecai sent her word that her position as queen gave her, as a Jewess, no sure protection against the fate of her people, and urged her to go at once into the king's presence and take the risk of the royal displeasure. She could but die, while there was a possibility that the royal sceptre would be held out to her and that she would gain all her requests.

Mordecai had an inward assurance that somehow the calamity would be averted and the people saved; his faith taught him so much. And what glory for Esther if it should prove that she was the divinely-appointed instrument for accomplishing this deliver-

ance! He sent her a message in words which have ever since been memorable: "If thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed; and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Animated and aroused by these words, Esther resolved upon the bold and perilous errand. Asking that the Jews in the royal city, Shushan, should observe a fast of three days, which she and her maidens would also observe in the palace, she sent word to her kinsman: "So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to law; and if I perish, I perish." Accordingly, on the third day Esther put on her royal apparel and presented herself uninvited before the throne of the despot, whose whim might have ordered her to execution or deposed her from her place as queen, as it had done in the case of Esther's predecessor, Vashti, for modestly refusing to appear when summoned to show her beauty to his boon-companions.

But the hearts of kings are in the hands of God. Esther was no sooner seen, as she stood trembling in the royal presence, than the golden sceptre was stretched toward her as a token of the favor of the monarch. She drew near and touched the top of the sceptre. "What wilt thou, Queen Esther?" was the kindly request of Xerxes. And then, anticipating every possible plea, he added, with Ori-

ental lavishness of speech, "It shall be even given thee to the half of my kingdom."

It is needless to add that the great work of deliverance was already practically accomplished, although Esther made no direct plea for this object at the moment. She moved cautiously toward her object. Perhaps fearing that the influence of Haman was too great to be at once overcome, she first flattered the sanguinary foe of her cousin and of her people by inviting him to a banquet which she made for the king and Haman alone. Finally, she revealed to the king her race, disclosed the plot which Haman had laid against her countrymen the Jews, and asked and obtained leave of the king that the Jews might arm themselves in defence against the destroyers. The royal permission would necessarily take this form, because no laws or edicts of the Medes and Persians could ever be repealed. Only a corresponding permission could be given to the Jews, so that by the two contradictory edicts of the king the two portions of his subjects, Jews and Persians, were barbarously arrayed against each other. A great slaughter was the result, in which seventy-five thousand Persians fell. Haman was hanged on a gallows which he had erected for Mordecai; Mordecai was advanced to the position from which Haman had fallen; and the Jews were in a condition of triumph throughout the whole vast kingdom of Xerxes.

Thus the security and perpetuation of the scattered

elements of this wonderful people in foreign lands, as well as in their own territory, were provided for; thus abroad and at home they were defended in their weakness, were rescued from the plots of their enemies, and were lifted into the highest places of honor and power from which their enemies had been thrown. When they seem on the very verge of a final and overwhelming catastrophe they are rescued by wonderful interpositions of providence, using humble instruments and seemingly humble occurrences to bring to pass its gracious plans.

No wonder the Jews have always held this part of their history in great esteem as one of the most critical and interesting of the whole. The feast of Purim, or "lots," instituted at that time by Mordecai and Esther, has been carefully kept up to this day. It precedes the Passover just one month, and is celebrated with great rejoicings. The book of Esther, although not mentioning the name of God or speaking of prayer, is so full of the divine purpose, and teaches so clearly the importance of even small events in the plan of God, and furnishes so needful a link in the history of the preservation of the Jewish people, that it is well worthy the exalted place which it has held in the Jews' esteem. They believed that it would outlast all the Scriptures save the Pentateuch.

The religious devotion of Esther, who took her life in her hands, and, against the established custom of a despotic court, ventured into the royal

presence to plead for her people, will never lose its place and influence in sacred literature. How many hesitating, penitent souls have been encouraged by her resolve to seek the presence of the King of kings, and humbly to submit themselves and their eternal destiny to his sovereign decision!—

> I can but perish if I go;
> I am resolved to try;
> For if I stay away I *know*
> I shall for ever die.

And to none such has the golden sceptre of pardon been refused.

A large and influential portion of the dispersed Jews continued to live in Babylonia for a long time. where they enjoyed considerable prosperity. Faithful to the old worship, they transmitted an annual tax in money and sacrificial animals to the temple at Jerusalem. They at one time furnished the high priest from their own number. They maintained their popularity under Alexander the Great, and they entered heartily into the military projects of Alexander's successors, the Seleucidæ, who confirmed their privileges. Later, about two centuries B. C., Antiochus the Great sent a colony of two thousand Babylonian Jews to replace the seditious inhabitants of certain localities in Phrygia and Lydia, with orders that they should enjoy their own laws, that each family should have land for a home and for agricultural purposes, that they

should be exempt from taxes for ten years, and should be supplied with the necessaries of life until they could harvest their own crops.

It was only in the decline of Babylon that the Jews of that region seem to have experienced reverses; and in the time of the Roman emperor Caligula they were compelled to move westward and emigrate to the city of Seleucia in the Syrian territory.

The other leading and influential division of the Diaspora ("dispersion") was that which was settled in Egypt. As early as the time of Solomon a degree of intimacy began to be cherished with the country of the old captivity. Alliances and treaties were formed between Egypt and Judah, especially in the latter days of the Jewish monarchy, for the purpose of resisting more effectually the threatened invasions of Assyria. As already narrated, the remnant left in Judea after the overthrow of the kingdom by Nebuchadnezzar, and the fugitives who had been rallied to the settlement and fortress of Mizpeh, migrated in a body to Egypt when the settlement was broken up by the raid of Ishmael and his robber-companions. Josephus says that these exiles were afterward carried from Egypt into Babylonia by Nebuchadnezzar.

But it is not likely that Egypt was ever without a considerable element of Jews in her population. Alexander the Great about 330 B. C. founded the city of Alexandria in Egypt, and introduced many

Jews into the colony, clothing them with full rights of citizenship and securing to them liberty of worship. This, says Josephus, was not because Alexander required inhabitants for his new city, but as a reward for the fidelity and virtue of the Jews, which he had satisfactorily tested.

Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, not long after Alexander (B. C. 320), had such confidence in the Jews that he put the fortresses of Egypt into their hands and sent others to hold the cities which he had conquered. His successor, Ptolemy Philadelphus, not only set all his own Jewish captives free, but gave large sums of money for the ransom of others. He also studied the Hebrew Scriptures, and secured learned interpreters to aid him in understanding their contents.

It was in Alexandria, too, that the famous version of the Old Testament in the Greek, called the Septuagint, was made; this was done about two hundred and twenty years before Christ, under the direction of one of these excellent early Ptolemies. It is said to have been the work of seventy-two interpreters chosen by the king. The story runs that each one was placed in a separate cell and required to translate the whole Old Testament by himself, and that when they were through and their work compared it was discovered that all the versions, thus separately made, were exactly alike! There is no good foundation for the story, which serves, however, to show in what high esteem the transla-

tion was held. And none can question the value of a work which opened to the Grecian mind and to the civilized world the treasures of Old Testament inspiration.

The claim has been made that the Greek philosopher Plato became acquainted with the Jews and with the main truths of the Old Testament in Egypt. It is certain that this great man, like other seekers of wisdom in those days, made extensive journeys, and Cicero says that he visited Egypt to study astronomy. There are several allusions to Egypt in Plato's writings, and there is so much that is elevated and biblical in his teachings concerning God, the soul, and virtue, that it is difficult to account for their spirit and tone unless we suppose some acquaintance with the Hebrew Scriptures, such as he might readily have gained from the Jews in Egypt.

As time rolled on the condition of the Jews in Egypt continued to improve, until one is reminded rather of Joseph at the court of Pharaoh than of the enslaved builders of the pyramids suffering under the exactions and lash of the taskmaster. Josephus tells us that the third of these Ptolemies went to Jerusalem to return thanks for his victories, rather than to an idol temple at home. Under another Ptolemy (Philometor) he even asserts that the whole kingdom was committed to the care of Jews—two Jews, Onias and Dositheus, being commanders of the entire Egyptian army, and

a new town, called Onium, being founded on the eastern borders of the kingdom and peopled with Jews as a defence against the enemies of Egypt.

Long after Egypt became a province of the Roman empire this favorable treatment of the Jews was continued. Philo, who lived a little before the time of Christ, makes it a thousand years of comfortable living for his people in that country. They were even allowed to build themselves a temple and to establish a priesthood at Leontopolis, a city of Lower Egypt. In Philo's time the Jews made up nearly one-half of the population of Alexandria, where they had several synagogues, one of which was very splendid. At the same time they maintained their connection with Palestine, sent a yearly tribute for the support of the temple there, and, as we learn from Acts vi. 9, maintained, in connection with the Cyrenians, a peculiar synagogue in Jerusalem.

It was under the reign of that most furious of Roman emperors, that maddest of royal madmen, Caligula, that misfortunes came thickly upon the Jews of the Dispersion both in Egypt and in Babylonia. Caligula reigned from A. D. 37 to 41. The storm broke upon Egypt, and first of all upon the Jews of Alexandria. At this time it is believed that the Jews numbered a million of the population. Their wealth may be inferred from the splendor of their great synagogue in that city. It rose like a grand palace, with colonnade

upon colonnade. It contained seventy golden thrones inlaid with precious stones, one for each of the elders of the Sanhedrim or Great Council. Each throne is said to have cost twenty-five millions of gold denarii; as a gold denarius was worth nearly four dollars, the value of the seventy thrones would be not far from seven thousand millions of dollars, not allowing for the far greater value of money in those days—when a silver denarius, or fifteen cents, would purchase a day's labor—compared with ours. While such exaggerated statements cannot be received as true, it is impossible that they could have been set afloat without some foundation in fact.

The Greek population of Alexandria, always jealous of the Jews, found an opportunity to indulge their feelings under the Roman governor Flaccus. They grossly insulted King Agrippa, who, on his way from Rome to Palestine, had stopped for a short time at Alexandria. They made a mock procession and put a poor idiot on an elevated seat as a burlesque of Agrippa, addressed him as king and brought petitions to him framed in the language of Palestine.

Caligula had demanded of all his subjects everywhere such honors and worship as were only due to God. His image must be set up in every sanctuary and must receive divine honors. Hateful as such a demand was to almost every people, it was worse to the Jews than death itself, and nowhere

had they entertained the thought of obeying it. But the Greeks of Alexandria now demanded that the statue of the emperor should be set up in all the Jewish places of prayer, and in fact proceeded to carry out their own purpose by force. In the largest sanctuary they placed the statue in a chariot drawn by four horses. Other places of worship they burned, or they cut down the trees that shaded them from the public gaze.

The Roman governor Flaccus now issued an edict requiring all the Jews to withdraw from other quarters of the city and to confine themselves to the two quarters properly belonging to them. Here they were so crowded and so badly housed that pestilence broke out among them; cut off, too, from outside intercourse, beaten and robbed if they ventured beyond their own quarters, they soon suffered the additional horrors of famine. Bloodshed followed, multitudes of Jews being the victims. If a Jewish vessel landed at the wharves it was plundered, the owners were killed and the vessel was destroyed. The houses in the Jews' quarters were also set on fire, and whole families were burned alive. Leading Jews, invited into the presence of Flaccus on the pretext of arranging some terms of accommodation, were treacherously seized, bound and publicly scourged, some of them dying from the blows on the spot. It was part of the daily entertainments of the theatre to see Jews scourged, tortured and led away to execution.

But this carnival of crime and cruelty happily did not last long. Flaccus had hoped to secure the favor of Caligula by such acts. He had kept back a letter of the Jews to Caligula expressing their loyalty to the new emperor, which, however, had reached Rome through Agrippa. An officer was sent to apprehend Flaccus, who was found at a banquet, and was seized and sent to Rome.

At first the Jews did not credit the rumor of the fall of their persecutor, but when the news was confirmed they broke out into songs of praise and spent the whole night in thanksgiving. The vengeance of Heaven seemed to follow the deposed governor—storms on the sea, accusers on the land, confiscation and banishment, contempt from the people, remorse in his own soul; and finally a horrible death, like some of those which he had ordered and had seen inflicted upon the Jews, was inflicted upon himself by order of the monarch whose favor he had hoped to obtain.

As, however, Caligula still insisted that his statue should be set up in every place of worship, the Jews of Alexandria sent a deputation to ask that their sanctuaries might be spared such desecration. After a tedious delay Caligula notified them that they would be received in two contiguous villas in the neighborhood of Rome, all the rooms of which were to be thrown open for the emperor's inspection.

The Jews entered and humbly saluted Caligula

as Augustus and emperor. "You," said the emperor fiercely, "are enemies of the gods; you alone refuse to acknowledge my divinity, but worship a God whose name you dare not pronounce." And here he uttered the name which we represent by the word "Jehovah," but the true pronunciation of which has been lost because of the persistent and over-scrupulous refusal of the Jews to utter it. The Jewish ambassadors were horrorstruck. Their accusers, encouraged, pressed their charge of disobedience against the Jews. They replied that, so far from disobeying, they were the very first who offered sacrifice in behalf of the emperor. "Yes," said the mocking Caligula, "sacrifice *for* me, but not *to* me." Then, as the Jews stood trembling, the emperor turned away and gave his attention to the condition of the villa, and as he passed from room to room the ambassadors followed him amid the jeers of the attendants.

Suddenly he turned upon them and abruptly asked, "Why do you not eat pork?" To this rude and unkingly question, which was greeted with a shout of laughter by the courtiers, the Jews made a modest reply. Caligula, softened for a moment, again turned upon them sharply and demanded upon what ground they claimed the right of citizenship. In the midst of their attempt to answer so grave a question he suddenly left them and went back and forth through the hall, giving orders to the attendants to put up a certain kind of trans-

parent stone blinds to the windows. This silly and contemptuous process was repeated, until finally the ambassadors were glad to get away with their lives. Caligula showed that the fickle levity of his nature was not always associated with cruelty by the words with which he dismissed them: "Well, after all, they do not seem so bad, but rather a poor foolish people who cannot believe that I am a god."

The death of Caligula and the advent of a humane emperor (Claudius) to power providentially saved the Alexandrian Jews from extinction at this time; their rights and their freedom were restored and re-established by a special decree. Under Nero, again, their condition became deplorable. A great massacre of Jews in Alexandria was committed by the Roman soldiers under the authority of the Roman governor of the city, in which fifty thousand Jews perished and the whole quarter ran with blood. Many of the survivors were reduced to poverty, and finally the temple of Onias at Leontopolis was plundered and closed.

Returning now to the Jews of Babylonia, we find their condition also becoming one of humiliation and disaster. They had maintained their distinct character with great persistence. It was indeed claimed that they were a purer part of the nation than the mixed multitude who returned to Palestine under Cyrus. The Targums, or Jewish books, say: "The flour remained in Babylon, the chaff came to

Palestine." They preserved the purity of their race far better than the returned exiles, whose very chiefs early contracted marriages with the neighboring Samaritans and heathen. Unlike their brethren in Egypt, they built no temple; the Holy of Holies in Jerusalem was the centre of their devotions. If they ceased to cherish attachment to Palestine as patriots, they never failed in reverence to the temple, they never relaxed the rigidity of their customs as Jews.

Their chief city was Nearda, situate upon a curve of the Euphrates and almost surrounded by the stream. It was a strong military position; there was the treasury for contributions to the temple. From time to time the accumulated tribute of two drachms (perhaps fifty cents) a head was transferred to Jerusalem.

Their exclusive habits subjected the Jews to suspicion and dislike, even if they always conducted themselves with a fair measure of prudence. But when two youths, issuing from this city of Nearda, became robber chiefs and gathered around them a band of plunderers, it was not surprising that the odium which they excited was visited upon unoffending members of their race. After various adventures the robber band was surprised by the Babylonian soldiers and put to death, and then vengeance was taken upon the whole Jewish population of the province.

Driven from Babylonia, they fled to the new city

of Seleucia in Syria. This city was divided into two factions, the Syrian and the Greek. At first the Jews joined the Syrians in opposition to the Greeks, but after a few years Greeks and Syrians combined against the Jews and glutted their common hatred of the race by slaying fifty thousand of their number. Few survived the massacre, which, as in Egypt, put an end for ever to the eminence and influence of the Jews in that country.

CHAPTER X.

THE JEWS IN PALESTINE.

AFTER the Jews were well settled in Palestine a long period—more than two centuries—of quiet ensued. Under the government of the Persian monarchs they were probably allowed to live in peace. No writings belonging to this period remain to us, and few were actually written. The prophet Malachi, who wrote about four hundred and ten years before Christ, not only closes the inspired volume of the Old Testament, but also completes the whole circle of Hebrew literature, properly so called.

The books which were afterward written appear to have been preserved only in Greek and Latin translations. They differ widely in character from those constituting the canon of the Old Testament. Not only is the historical accuracy, but often even the personal truthfulness of the writers, open to the gravest question. The life, the vigor, the divine grandeur of the Old Testament no longer appear, but trivialities, narrow views of religion, minute and silly teachings about angels and devils, take

their place. The contrast between inspired and uninspired writings can nowhere be shown to better advantage than in passing from Job, the Psalms and Isaiah to the very best specimens of writing in the Old Testament Apocrypha.

Among the few historic records which may belong to this era is that of Judith and Holofernes, contained in the book of Judith, the first of the books called apocryphal. From this account it appears that an Assyrian army under one of the highest generals of the kingdom had invaded the northern part of Judea and laid siege to the town of Bethulia. The water-supplies of the town were cut off, and after enduring a siege of forty days the suffering people began to demand that the place be surrendered. Whereupon the commander, Ozias, agreed that if deliverance did not come in five days he would yield to the clamors of the people.

Judith, who had been a widow three years and more, rich, beautiful and pious, reproved the commander for his want of faith and limiting of God's providence, and offered personally to undertake the enterprise of rescuing the city. She laid aside her widow's weeds, anointed herself and put on her richest attire, and, taking a maid-servant and a supply of provisions, passed out of the gate and presented herself in the enemy's camp. Professing to have fled from the doomed town, and offering information to the enemy by which it might successfully be attacked, as well as captivating all

hearts by her beauty, she was conducted to the general's tent.

The general heard her story, appointed her a place of abode and allowed her to retire from the camp every evening, as she said, for prayer; in reality, she kept up communication at such times with her brethren in the beleaguered town. On the fourth day Holofernes made a banquet to which he invited Judith; he drank heavily, and when the other guests retired and left Judith alone with Holofernes, he was utterly stupefied and helpless from the effects of the debauch, having never before drunk so much in his life.

This was the brave woman's opportunity. Seizing the sword of the prostrate general, with two strokes she severed his head from his body. Calling in her servant, who was at hand, she put the head in the bag in which the provisions had been carried, and the two started for Bethulia, passing without difficulty the guards, who supposed they were going to their accustomed devotions outside the camp. Arrived beneath the walls of Bethulia, Judith cried out to the watchman to open the gates, for God had come with them.

Once within, she exhibited her ghastly prize and stirred up the people to make a sally early in the morning. The enemy, dispirited and shocked by the loss of their general, turned and fled in every direction. On every side the Jews rose up against the fugitives, and abundance of rich spoils fell into

the hands of the people. The camp furnished plunder for thirty days, a notable share of which was apportioned to Judith. She remained a widow all the rest of her life, and finally died at the age of one hundred and five years, greatly honored for her piety. Peace prevailed during her days and for a long time after her death.

True or fabulous, the story of Judith forms almost the only incident from the times of Nehemiah and Malachi to the appearance of Alexander the Great before the walls of Jerusalem. During this uneventful period of nearly one hundred and fifty years the Greek nation reached its highest stage of development and passed through the most momentous crises of its history in war, in political revolutions, in literature and in art. Pericles flourished; the thirty years' Peloponnesian war was fought to its melancholy close; Athens was devastated by the plague; Socrates taught in the streets and drank hemlock in the prison of that famous city; Plato and Aristotle gave the signal to which all the speculative thought of the civilized world has since responded; Demosthenes vainly thundered against the arts, the gold and the arms of Philip, and failed to arrest the decline of Greece, which continued until it became a mere appendage to the Macedonian power.

It was the son of Philip of Macedon, Alexander the Great, who, coming two centuries after Daniel, fulfilled the prophetic interpretation of Nebuchad-

nezzar's dream and the visions of the prophet himself. His was the Macedonian or Greek kingdom, the third of the four kingdoms symbolized by the image of gold, of silver, of brass and of iron. He was the winged leopard of the vision in the seventh chapter of Daniel, and the he-goat of the vision in the eighth chapter who came from the West with such swiftness that he seemed not to touch the ground. The rapid development of his power and the great extent of his conquests are well described by these prophetic Scriptures.

In the year 332 B. C. Alexander captured the city of Tyre after a siege of seven months. Thence he proceeded to Gaza, which held out two months, and then surrendered. He now turned his face to Jerusalem, which hitherto had refused to yield to his demand for troops and tribute, and which therefore had reason to fear his vengeance.

Josephus tells us that the Jewish high priest received instructions in a dream as to the manner in which this all-conquering general, this he-goat from the West, should be met if he approached Jerusalem. When he learned that Alexander was close at hand, in obedience to these intimations he formed an immense procession, made up of priests in their official robes of white linen, and a multitude of citizens, also clothed in white, the color of peace. At the head of this procession the high priest himself walked, magnificently clad in purple and scarlet, with a mitre on his head, and bound upon his

forehead a gold plate on which was engraved the name of the Deity. Thus peacefully arrayed, they marched out to meet the conqueror and his army.

Alexander was upon the heights of Mizpeh when he caught sight of this singular and solemn procession issuing from the gates of Jerusalem. Descending from his chariot, he advanced alone to meet it, and reverently bowed to the high priest, adoring the name written on the gold plate. The Jews surrounded him and saluted him with one voice. "But why," asked his chief general, Parmenio, "when all men adore you, should you adore the Jewish priest?"—"I do not adore him," was the reputed answer, "but God, whose priest he is. This very person, in this very dress, I long ago saw in a dream, and he gave me encouragement and instruction when I was considering how I might obtain the dominion over Asia." Such a remarkable coincidence of dreams is not without a parallel in the history of Providence.

Giving the high priest his right hand, he went with the procession to Jerusalem. There he visited the temple, and offered sacrifice under the direction of the priest. Those passages in the book of Daniel in which the triumph of Greece over Persia was foretold were shown to him, and he naturally, and not incorrectly, interpreted them of himself. Thus brought into sympathy with the people, he asked them what favors he could grant them. They replied that their only wish was that they and their

brethren in Media and Babylonia might be permitted to conform to the laws of their forefathers and be relieved from tribute in the seventh or sabbatical year, when it was not lawful for them to till the ground. These requests were readily granted, and Alexander departed from the Holy City, taking with him a large number of voluntary recruits for his army.

The death of Alexander occurred June 28, 323 years B. C. He was but thirty-two years of age; deep carousing had brought on a fever, of which he died after eleven days' sickness. Thus "the horn" of Daniel's vision was broken, and four smaller horns—that is, four smaller kingdoms—arose in its place. These four kingdoms, after many contentions among Alexander's generals, were arranged and distributed as follows: Macedon and Greece, governed by Cassander; Thrace and the neighboring coasts of Asia Minor, under Lysimachus; Egypt, Arabia and a part of Syria, including Palestine, under Ptolemy; Persia and the East generally, allotted to Seleucus.

Some of these countries did not quietly accept the generals who claimed supreme authority over them. In particular, Judea resisted the claims and defied the authority of Ptolemy. An Egyptian army entered Palestine, and Jerusalem, after two centuries of peace, was once more encompassed by besieging hosts. Strongly fortified, populous and powerful, proud and prosperous in the liberties and exemp-

tions guaranteed by Alexander, the city gave promise of a stubborn resistance. But the strict observance of the sabbath by the Jews led to their defeat. They would not fight on that day, even to repel an enemy from their city-gates or to save their own lives. Ptolemy's army, taking advantage of this, chose the sabbath for their attack, and, meeting no resistance, easily became masters of the city.

Ptolemy at first dealt very harshly with the conquered city and province. He carried away no less than a hundred thousand of the inhabitants as captives into Egypt. But his policy soon changed, and, as has already been described, nowhere were the Jews more prosperous or privileged than under the reign of the Ptolemies in the country of the first captivity. Although the land of Judea was a border province between the jealous and often warring kingdoms of Egypt and Syria, yet during the three reigns of Ptolemy Soter, Ptolemy Philadelphus and Ptolemy Euergetes, nearly eighty years, the country flourished, and, although surrounded by almost universal wars, enjoyed profound peace within its borders and received many marks of royal favor. The last of these Ptolemies, surnamed Euergetes, or "Benefactor," when he had conquered Syria, chose to return thanks at the temple in Jerusalem, and offered gifts to the true God in commemoration of his victory, rather than to the brutish gods of his own country.

Toward the close of his reign an incident oc-

curred which illustrates the unjust and arbitrary methods of collecting revenues which then prevailed, and which are yet one of the chief burdens of Oriental despotism, and hindrances to the prosperity of the subject peoples.

The payment of the customary tribute to Egypt having been neglected by the Jewish authorities, the country was in danger of invasion by Ptolemy. The nephew of the high priest, Joseph by name, undertook to mediate in the matter, and set out for Egypt on his mission. Journeying in a caravan, he overheard the conversation of parties who were also bound to the court of Euergetes, and who made no secret of their errand, which was to obtain the farming of the revenues of Joseph's own country and the neighboring regions of Syria. They intended to offer the king eight thousand talents, and were sure that they could exact a vastly greater sum from the inhabitants, and could enrich themselves immensely with the difference.

Joseph was received with great favor at the court of Ptolemy, and when his fellow-travellers of the caravan came to make their bid of eight thousand talents for the revenue, he promptly offered double that sum. His sureties or securities were demanded, when he boldly named the king and queen themselves. The spirited behavior of the man made so good an impression that his offer was accepted, and he went back to Palestine with a force of two thousand men to assist him in making collections. Re-

bellious opposition was promptly and unsparingly punished. Twenty men who resisted were slain at Ascalon, and their entire property—one thousand talents—confiscated; a similar example of severity was given at Scythopolis, after which Joseph found no difficulty in raising the whole amount due to the king and in deriving great profit for himself. For twenty-two years he continued to discharge the duties of the office with vigilance, punctuality and prudence; nor does he seem to have given any such ground of complaint as, even down to our time, the oppressive measures of Oriental tax-gatherers have not ceased to furnish.

This brings the history to the year 219 B. C. In that year Antiochus the Great, king of Persia, attempted to annex Judea to his own dominions. The king of Egypt, Ptolemy Philopator, met and totally defeated him in a great battle near Gaza. After this victory he entered Jerusalem. He made rich presents to the temple, and pressed forward to enter that part of the sanctuary which was only accessible to the Jews. This sacrilegious attempt threw the whole body of priests and people into the utmost consternation. A great tumult and a loud cry arose. It seemed as if the very walls and the pavement helped to swell the outcry. The high priest, Simon the Just, warned the monarch to desist, and with a powerful voice, which rose above the noise of the tumult, invoked the aid of the all-seeing God against the attempted desecra-

tion. The king was seized with a supernatural awe and horror; like a reed broken by the wind he fell helpless upon the pavement, and was borne out by his guards.

In the line of high priests extending from the period of the Old to that of the New Dispensation none holds a loftier place than this "Simon the Just." Indeed, there seem to have been two high priests bearing the same name and enjoying the same honorable title. With the death of the last one closed the long era of quiet and prosperity enjoyed by Judea, which had lasted for about two hundred years.



The splendid appearance of Simon in performing the temple-service made a deep impression upon the people. When he came out from behind the sacred curtain of the Holy of Holies, they said it was like the morning star bursting from a cloud or the moon in her fullness. It was like the sun shining upon the temple, or the rainbow in the clouds. They compared it to the freshly-blown rose, to the fragrance of frankincense, to the beauty of a vessel of gold adorned with gems. They followed every gesture with admiration. He gave

additional honor to the robes of his office. His benediction at the close of the service was an event cherished in the memory of all who had received it.

The respect in which Simon was held by his countrymen was shared by the heathen monarch Antiochus the Great, who furnished him with timber and stone for the repairs of the city and temple and for the elevation of the city-walls.

One of his sayings has come down to our time: "There are three foundations of the world—the Law, worship and benevolence."

Once there came a youth from the south of Palestine to the temple to consecrate himself as a Nazarite. Simon was not disposed to encourage the assuming of this severe vow. He looked at the youth, whose eyes were beautiful, whose air was magnificent, and whose long hair fell clustering over his face. "Why," said Simon, "must you shave off those splendid locks?"

The youth replied, "I was a shepherd of my father's flocks in my native village. One day, drawing water at the well, I saw with pride and admiration my reflection in the water. Frightened at myself, I said, 'Wicked one, wilt thou be proud of that which does not belong to thee, who art but worms and dust? O God, I will cut off these curls for the honor of Heaven." Simon embraced him, and exclaimed, "Would that there were many such Nazarites in Israel!"

CHAPTER XI.

THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION.

THE Egyptian monarch, Ptolemy Philopator, retained such a disagreeable remembrance of his repulse from the temple at Jerusalem that he became one of the most implacable enemies of the Jewish people. Under the government of his successor, Ptolemy Epiphanes, the Persian monarch, Antiochus the Great, defeated the Egyptian forces at the source of the Jordan and became undisputed master of Judea. The Persian king was received as a deliverer in Jerusalem.

Thus was fulfilled the prophecy in the eleventh chapter of Daniel, especially from the eleventh to the nineteenth verse, in which the king of Egypt is described as the king of the South, and is destined to be utterly overthrown by the king of the North.

This change of government was at first favorable to the Jews. But difficulties and conflicts soon arose. The power of Rome was now beginning to be felt in these remote parts of the world. Seleucus, one of the successors of Antiochus, was compelled to empty his treasuries to satisfy her exor-

bitant demands for tribute. Unfortunately, just at this time the governor of the temple at Jerusalem, falling into a dispute with the high priest Onias, was compelled to fly to Apollonius, one of the officers of Seleucus, to whom he gave an account of the incalculable treasures laid up in the Jewish temple. These treasures included many private deposits of widows and orphans, supposed to be secure under the shelter of the sanctuary.

This was good news to the impoverished king. He immediately despatched his treasurer, Heliodorus, with an armed guard to seize the treasure. Then occurred one of the most memorable scenes in the history of the temple. A universal panic arose; the temple-courts were crowded with supplicants; the women ran frantically through the streets; the priests fell prostrate before the altar. As the royal officer advanced to profane and pillage the sacred place a horse with a terrible rider clad in golden armor suddenly dashed into the temple-area and trampled Heliodorus under his feet. On either side of the rider stood two magnificent youths, who lashed the prostrate intruder with great violence. Half dead, the treasurer was carried away, and was only revived upon the promise of the high priest to intercede in his behalf. This took place about the year 187 B. C., and marks the beginning of an era of tumult and war.

The successor of Seleucus was Antiochus IV. His character was made up of the strangest and

wildest contradictions, so that he is known both as the "Brilliant" (*Epiphanes*) and as the "Madman" (*Epimanes*). He was not wanting in generosity



(MODERN) ANTIOCH IN SYRIA.

and kindness, yet he was also savage and tyrannical. He almost created and greatly adorned the city of Antioch, and yet he descended to the lowest

revels and mingled with the meanest of his subjects in their riotous frolics. He cherished great projects for the advancement of commerce and civilization in the Eastern World. In the words of Daniel (xi. 36), he exalted himself and magnified himself above every god, and yet he condescended to play practical jokes in the streets, startling a group of young revelers by bursting in upon them with a pipe and a horn—tumbling with the bathers on the slippery marble pavement as they ran to receive the shower of precious ointment which he had prepared for himself. Again, he would mimic in public the forms of an election as a magistrate; as a candidate for office he would put on a white robe and canvass the passers-by in the streets for their votes. Then, as if he had been elected, he would cause his chair of office to be set in the open market-place, and there would pretend to administer justice. The contradictions of his charater seemed to come to a climax in a splendid procession which he organized at Daphne in a style to outshine the most magnificent of the Roman triumphs, but in which he appeared riding in and out on a hack, playing the part of chief waiter, buffoon and jester.

Antiochus IV. has been compared to Peter the Great, but he certainly resembles the mad and wicked Roman emperor Caligula quite as much. He was cruel, intolerant and a persecutor of the Jews, yet his very cruelty and the hatefulness of

his character were providentially made the safeguard of the Jewish people against the great danger of his reign—the greatest, in the opinion of some, to which they had ever been exposed. This was the project which he attempted to execute of reducing to uniformity the manners, customs and creeds of the various peoples included in his empire. It was his fixed purpose to force Grecian manners, Grecian arts, Grecian vices, Grecian idolatry, upon the Jews.

The danger was indeed great. It came from within as well as from without. As the purity of the Jewish stock was threatened with corruption by the mixed marriages which leading citizens contracted with the surrounding heathens in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, so there were not wanting at this time many willing proselytes, even in priestly families, who pretended to despise the sober manners and solemn rites peculiar to the national life and religion. There was, in fact, a Grecian party in Palestine itself. Greek names were introduced, and the Hebrew names were either entirely displaced or corrupted. In computing time the Greek era, called the Era of the Seleucidæ, was adopted.

The office of high priest was sold by the impoverished government of Antiochus to the highest bidder. In this way Onias, the high priest, was ousted by his own brother, Joshua. As might be expected from the author of such an unnatural

and disgraceful act, Joshua threw his entire influence upon the side of the Grecian party. He took the Greek name of Jason. He allowed the services of the temple to fall into neglect. He built a gymnasium and introduced the whole system of Grecian physical training. It must have shocked the great body of the people to see the Greek games performed under the very citadel of David, where the most active of the Jewish youths ran, wrestled and leaped like the Grecian athletes, wearing only sashes and the broad-brimmed hat in imitation of the god Hermes, guardian of the gymnastic festivals. The priests in the temple held their duties in so light esteem that they ran down from the court to behold the spectacle as soon as they heard the signal for the beginning of the games. Even the names of Jerusalem and Judea were laid aside and the people called themselves citizens of Antioch.

But the trick of Joshua was practiced upon himself. The officer whom he sent to pay tribute at Antioch, and who had assumed the Greek name of Menelaus, treacherously outbid his employer and bought the office of high priest from the Syrian king. Menelaus returned to Jerusalem raging like a savage beast. Joshua fled from the country. Menelaus, finding the treasury exhausted by the extravagance of his predecessor, sacrilegiously seized the golden vessels of the temple and sold them to Tyre to raise the promised tribute. The deposed high priest, Onias, publicly denounced the

outrage, but only succeeded in drawing upon himself the vengeance of Menelaus. He was dragged from a heathen sanctuary near Antioch and slain, in defiance of the most sacred feelings of Jew and Gentile alike. Even Antiochus lamented his death.

His son Onias, on hearing of his father's death, fled from Palestine to Egypt, and there erected a rival temple at Heliopolis, about four miles from the modern Cairo, which long stood as a monument of the horror created by his father's death.

Meantime, the plunder of the temple had aroused the indignation of the people of Jerusalem. They attacked Lysimachus, the brother of Menelaus, who had been left in command with three thousand men, overpowered and slew him.

At this time it is said that fearful portents appeared in the heavens above the city. For almost forty days horsemen were seen galloping through the air, clad in golden armor and bearing lances. Squadrons of cavalry seemed to charge and encounter each other with shaking of shields, flashing of swords and glittering of golden ornaments and harness. Joshua, the dispossessed high priest, captured the city, shut up Menelaus in the castle and began to practice the most horrible cruelties upon his opponents. Antiochus regarded this as a deliberate revolt of the whole people, and, having conquered Egypt, marched without delay at the head of his victorious army against Jerusalem.

The ill-fated city fell with little resistance. The terrified people were hewn down in the streets. They were chased to the roofs of their houses. Forty thousand of the inhabitants perished, and as many more were seized to be sold as slaves. But worse even than this, Antiochus entered the Holy of Holies, plundered the treasury, seized the golden candlestick, the table of shew-bread and the altar of incense. The golden candlestick was believed to have fallen to the share of the renegade Menelaus. Antiochus then commanded a great sow to be sacrificed on the altar of burnt-offerings, part of the flesh to be boiled, and the broth of the unclean creature to be sprinkled over every part of the temple.

In fact, Antiochus seemed determined upon the utter extermination of the Hebrew race. Two years after his own attack upon the city he despatched Apollonius to repeat the bloody procedure. Apollonius waited till the sabbath, when all the people were occupied in their religious duties. He then let loose his soldiers upon the unresisting populace, slew the men till the streets ran blood, threw down the walls which Nehemiah had built with so much care, and carried away multitudes into captivity.

After burning some of the best portions of the city, he built a citadel overlooking the temple and garrisoned it with Macedonian soldiers. He forbade the people to practice their own worship, and

commanded them to build temples and altars and make daily offerings of swine to idols in every city and village. Cruel punishments, and death itself, were inflicted upon those who disobeyed. Men, women and children were crucified and strangled. Copies of the Scriptures when found were destroyed and their owners were put to death.

The country was in a sad plight. Such cruelty, outrage and persecution had not been witnessed there since the return from the Exile; indeed, never before in the history of the inhabitants of Judea. A rude Phrygian governor, Philip, commanded the garrison in Jerusalem. He was surrounded by those unfaithful Jews who composed the Greek party, and Menelaus, animated by a malicious hatred against his countrymen, still retained the office of high priest.

Every corner of Judea was now invaded by the agents of the idolatrous government, bent on forcing the people into heathenism. A special commissioner, Athenæus, an aged man, well versed in the usages of the Grecian religion, was appointed to preside over this movement. In Jerusalem every observance of the Jewish religion was suppressed. The people were forced to profane the sabbath, to eat swine's flesh and other unclean food, and were expressly forbidden to perform the rite of circumcision. The temple was dedicated to Jupiter Olympus, the same deity to whom Antiochus was at that time erecting a stately temple in Athens. A statue

of Jupiter was erected upon the altar of burnt-offerings. The feasts of the Bacchanalia, the most profane and riotous of all the orgies of the Greeks, were introduced in place of the festival of Tabernacles. Grave Israelites were compelled to join in these odious ceremonies with wreaths of ivy upon their heads, sometimes with the ivy-leaf branded upon their skins.

Here, again, the words of Daniel were fulfilled with surprising accuracy: "Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, . . . but he shall honor the god of forces, and a god whom his fathers knew not;" * for Antiochus had adopted the gods of Rome instead of those of his own country, and it was these foreign deities which he had resolved, with every device of persecuting cruelty, to force upon the Jewish people.

It seemed, indeed, as if the true religion was about to be rooted up and cast out of its native country. The temple was rendered unfit for the performance of the peculiar rites of Judaism. The great gates were burned. The enclosure between the outer and inner courts was broken down. The once smooth and well-kept pavements were overgrown by rank vegetation. On the 25th of December, B. C. 168, a herd of swine was driven into the enclosure and slaughtered there. It was then, according to one account, that the altar was desecrated, and even the Holy of Holies profaned, by

* Dan. xi. 37, 38.

the blood of one of these animals, and copies of the Scriptures sprinkled with its broth.

This was the "abomination of desolation;" this filled every Jewish heart with unspeakable horror; this turned the whole sacred place into a desert. The daily offerings ceased, the perpetual light was extinguished, and the faithful Israelites no longer visited the spot once most dear of all on earth.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MACCABEES—FIRST CAMPAIGN.

FAR from quenching the spirit of Judaism, these great trials and humiliations only gave occasion for some of its most memorable manifestations. While multitudes submitted, multitudes remained faithful, and many dared the worst rather than yield. The martyr spirit was aroused. The examples of Daniel in the lions' den and of the three children in the fiery furnace found worthy imitators.

Among these martyrs was the venerable Eleazar, a scribe ninety years of age. One of the indignities inflicted upon the Jews at this time was the forcing of swine's flesh into their mouths. Eleazar steadily refused the unclean food in his mouth, although torture and death were the penalty. "I would rather die," he said, "and leave an example to such as are young to die willingly and courageously for laws so honorable and holy." So saying, he walked boldly to the rack, and was scourged to death.

The story is also told in the same connection of seven brothers who, with their mother, had refused to eat swine's flesh. One after another, six of these

brethren were slain with dreadful tortures, each in sight of the survivors. Each remained faithful in spite of the sufferings of the others. When it came the turn of the seventh and youngest, the attempt was made to shake his firmness by the promise of wealth and prosperity, the friendship of the government and high official position if he would forsake the customs of his fathers. Encouraged by his mother, he refused these tempting offers and boldly faced the fate of his brothers. The martyrdom of the mother closed the dreadful but glorious spectacle.

But the time of submission was past; the hour of resistance had come. In former times Providence interposed with miraculous assistance, but now he worked by the instrumentality of human virtues—by lofty patriotism, valor and military skill—to deliver the chosen people from destruction.

On a hilltop on the road from Jerusalem to Joppa stood the town of Modin. Here dwelt the priest Mattathias with his five sons. From their family name, Asmon, they were called the Asmoneans. These sons, now in the prime of life, were named Johannan, Simon, Judas, Eleazar and Jonathan. The agents of the king, charged with the duty of forcing idolatrous rites and practices upon the Jews, penetrated every quarter and sought out every village in the kingdom. When they reached the village of Modin they selected Mattathias as a

man of great influence, and made him splendid offers to induce him to submit to the royal decree. They said, "You are a leading man in the city. You have sons and brothers. If you will be the first to do the will of the king, as all people have done, with the men of Judea and the survivors of Jerusalem, you and your house shall be reckoned among the friends of the king, and you and your sons shall be loaded with money and gifts."

But Mattathias answered, in a voice loud enough for all to hear him, "If every one else obeys the king and abandons the worship of the God of his fathers, yet will I and my sons and my brothers cleave to the ancient covenant. Far be it from us to forsake the Law. We will not obey the king's command to turn to the right or the left from the service of our God."

When he ceased an apostate Jew stepped forward to make an offering upon the king's altar. Mattathias, burning with indignation and quivering in every nerve, ran upon the apostate and slew him on the spot. His zeal and courage rose with the deed. Turning upon the king's commissioner and his associates, he put them to death and tore down the hateful altar of heathenism. Whereupon Mattathias raised the war-cry: "Whoever is for the Law and the covenant let him come after me."

He and his sons fled to the mountains, and many followed them with their wives and their flocks, taking refuge in the wilderness and among the

limestone caverns. Paul must have had these faithful ones in his mind when he wrote, in the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews, verses 37 and 38, "They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts and mountains and in dens and caves of the earth."

The officers of Antiochus at Jerusalem took measures to suppress this sudden outbreak. An armed force was sent to hunt out the insurgents. On the sabbath day they came upon a cave containing one thousand of them. At first the commander tried to persuade them to come out of the cave, promising them their lives if they would submit to the king. Refusing his offers and declining to fight on the sabbath day, the occupants of the cave were easily overpowered. "Let us all die in our innocence," they said. "Heaven and earth are our witnesses that we perish unjustly." They were all put to death, with their wives, children and cattle.

From this time Mattathias and his followers pursued a different policy in regard to the observance of the sabbath. "If we continue to do as our brethren have done," said they, "and forbear to fight on the seventh day for our lives and laws against the heathen, they will quickly root us out of the earth. Henceforth, whenever we are assailed upon the sabbath day we will offer battle, and not

submit to be murdered like our brethren." "And this rule," says Josephus, "continues among us to this day, so that in case of necessity we may fight on the sabbath."

All minor divisions among the faithful of the Jews were now forgotten. Those capable of bearing arms gathered in great numbers around the venerable leader and his sons. No peace was given to those of their countrymen who had adopted Greek and heathen customs. From the mountain-fastnesses where they had their camps they poured down upon the towns, destroyed the heathen altars, recovered many copies of the Law which their enemies had defiled, re-established the synagogues, enforced circumcision, and punished all apostates who fell into their hands.

Within a year occurred the death of the aged Mattathias. As he was passing away he called his sons around his dying bed and addressed them as follows: "O my sons, I die in the midst of evil and perilous times. I beseech you be zealous for the Law and spare not your lives for the covenant of your fathers. Remember the deeds of your fathers. Remember the trial of Abraham's faith and his reward. Remember Joseph's imprisonment and triumph. Remember Phineas and Joshua and Caleb, David, Elijah and Daniel. Fear not the words of sinful men, who are nothing but dust and worms. Be brave and show yourselves men, for they who uphold the Law shall be

honored thereby. Take your brother Simon, whom I know to be a wise man, and obey him as your father; and take Judas the Maccabee, a man of war from his youth, as your commander-in-chief, and carry on the war for the life and freedom of the people. Punish the heathen and keep the commandments."

To these counsels Mattathias added a prayer to God to be their help and to restore to the people their freedom and their laws; then, bestowing upon them his blessing, he was gathered to his fathers. So great was the terror and renown of his name that he was buried, without disturbance on the part of the enemy, in his native town of Modin amid the universal lamentations of the people.

The dying chieftain left behind him the noblest of legacies, a family of five sons, each of them a hero and each a host in himself and ready to carry on the contest without an instant's delay. Rare and beautiful was the spectacle of five brothers animated by the same lofty enthusiasm, without a particle of jealousy, sacrificing themselves for the same cause, one surviving the other only to carry it on, if possible, with more zeal and success, while not one had any ambition but to advance the great cause for which the father was the first to fall.

Each of the five sons succeeded, in turn, to the chieftainship, and each had a separate title added

to his given name. But only one of these surnames has gained historical eminence, and that is the "Maccabee," which was borne by the third brother, Judas. The derivation of this name is uncertain. It seems most natural to refer it to the Hebrew word *Maccab*, meaning "hammer." This is the derivation given by Gesenius, and this term well describes the character of the warrior who dealt such crushing blows upon the enemies of his country. It is like the title worn by Charles of France, who was called Charles Martel, or "Charles the Hammer," from the overwhelming blows which he dealt upon the Saracen hosts in the great battle of Tours, A. D. 732.

The young general entered upon his new career in a spirit of vigor and hope which communicated itself to the whole army. All his brothers and all the adherents of his father remained faithful to the new leader. They compared him to a young lion roaring for his prey, but his measures proved him to be a wise and skillful no less than an enterprising leader. For a time he remained concealed in the mountain-fastnesses, from which he made occasional descents upon the open country. He tested and trained his soldiers by many gallant adventures. He surprised many cities, which he garrisoned and fortified, and at last found himself strong enough to meet the enemy in the open field.

In the summer of 166 B. C. Apollonius gathered

his heathen forces and moved a large army from Samaria against the Israelites. As soon as he heard of it, Judas advanced to meet him, gave him battle and defeated him. Apollonius himself was slain, and Judas, taking the sword of the fallen general as a trophy, carried it with him in battle ever afterward.

Seron, the deputy governor of Syria, undertook to avenge the death of Apollonius. He gathered a powerful force and advanced upon the army of Judas, which was much inferior in numbers. The scene of this second battle was the heights of Beth-horon, famous for the defeat of the Canaanitish kings by Joshua in the early history of the nation, and afterward famous for a great disaster to a Roman army. The forces of the Maccabees were at first disheartened by the superior numbers of the enemy, but Judas encouraged them to trust in God, with whom it made no difference whether there were few or many in giving the victory. He reminded them that it was for wives and children, for life and for their laws, that they contended. "Fear them not," he exclaimed; "God will smite them before our eyes." With these words he summoned them to the assault, and Seron and his hosts were defeated and driven from the heights into the plain below as far as the country of the Philistines.

The circumstances of the times favored the struggle of Judas and his followers for independence. Antiochus himself was called away by difficulties

in the eastern part of his empire, but an immense army still remained at the disposal of his officers for crushing the insurrection in Judea. Its numbers were placed at forty thousand foot and seven thousand horse. In their train came a multitude of slave-merchants, who expected to transact a profitable business in the purchase of the captive Jews.

To meet this mighty host Judas could command a force of but six thousand men. These he assembled at the ridge of Mizpeh, from which they could have a plain view of the Holy City. It was a sad spectacle. Jerusalem was almost as desolate as a wilderness. None went in or out of its closed gates. The temple was unvisited by worshipers. The holy hill was garrisoned by a heathen army. Every sight or sound of joy had vanished.

On this melancholy spot the little army of the Maccabees fasted and prayed and rent their garments for several days. They spread out the books of the Law, which the heathen had desecrated by painting them over with the images of their idols. They brought out the garments of the priests and the firstlings and the tithes, and the procession of Nazarites, who could not fulfill their vows in the temple, and then, with the sound of trumpets and with loud voices, they lifted their prayers to God.

And now Judas took a daring step. Knowing that his only hope, humanly speaking, was in the enthusiasm of his followers for the law of Moses, he issued to his little army the proclamation

that all who had married wives, built houses, planted vineyards or were afraid should return home. This reduced his force one-half, yet with these three thousand ill-armed men in the spirit of Gideon he advanced toward Emmaus, where the enemy were encamped. Learning that a detachment of five thousand foot and one thousand horse had been sent to surprise him by night, he instantly formed the bold design of himself falling upon the main camp of the enemy. The unexpected onset, delivered with great impetuosity and clanging of trumpets, overwhelmed the Greek Syrians, who fled in every direction. Three thousand fell in battle.

Judas wisely restrained the victors from the plunder of the camp, for another struggle awaited them when the soldiers sent against the Jewish camp should return. They were not long in making their appearance. Weary with their vain search among the hills, astounded at the sight of their own camp in flames and in the hands of the enemy, they turned and fled without waiting to be attacked. The rich booty of the Grecian camp was now open to the little army of the Hebrews, and great was the spoil of gold and silver, of blue and purple fabrics, and of slaves.

It was the eve of the sabbath on which the battle had closed, and amid their rich booty and in return for their glorious victory the victors offered praise in the words of the one hundred and thirty-sixth Psalm: "Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for he is

good, for his mercy endureth for ever." This psalm had been so often used on similar occasions that it has been called the national anthem of the Jews. Thus ended the first campaign of the Maccabees.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RECOVERY OF JERUSALEM.

B. C. 165. The fugitives from the battle of Emmaus fled to Lysias, the governor of the province. His head-quarters were at Beth-zur, about fifteen miles south of Jerusalem. In the following year Lysias took the field with an army of sixty thousand foot and five thousand horse. By this time the army of the Maccabees had increased to ten thousand men. With this force Judas marched to meet the enemy. Offering a prayer to God for help, he engaged in the unequal conflict. Once more the righteous cause triumphed; the army of the heathen was overthrown and scattered, with a loss of five thousand men. Lysias retired to the city of Antioch, and took measures to gather a new army, and planned another attack upon Judea.

But the way was now open for the Maccabees to enter Jerusalem. Although a Greek garrison still held the fortress, the Jews took possession of the city without encountering any opposition. They beheld the ruined temple. They found shrubs growing like the underwood of a forest in the

courts. The altar was desecrated, the gates burned with fire, the chambers of the priests destroyed.

Setting a sufficient watch upon the garrison, Judas proceeded to the purification of the temple. Priests were chosen, the heathen altars were cast out. The altar of burnt-offering, which had been polluted by swine's blood, was torn down and the stones laid away until a prophet should come who might direct them in finally disposing of them. A new altar and a new sanctuary were built. The sacred vessels were also replaced—the candlesticks, the altar of incense, the tables and the curtains.

On the 25th day of December, just three years after the catastrophe of the profanation, the purified temple was rededicated. Eight days were spent in religious festivities, and thus the Feast of Dedication was established, which ever since has been held sacred in the Jewish calendar. The perpetual light was rekindled. Some said that this was done by a miracle; other accounts say that, instead of starting it from other and common lights, it was kindled by striking stones together. It is a tradition of the rabbis that in cleansing the temple a single vial of oil was found, sealed with the ring of the high priest, which assured them that it was not polluted. However, the quantity was so small that it was just enough to furnish light in the ordinary manner for one day. Yet by the divine blessing it continued to supply the lamps for the entire eight days of the festival. So much stress was laid upon this

rekindling of the sacred fire that the festival was also called the "Feast of Lights."

As afterward celebrated, the illumination of the temple and of the private houses of the Jews was a principal part of the ceremony. Even now the feast is kept very strictly by the Jews, and is regarded as a time of rejoicing over the wonders which God has wrought for their nation. There is something remarkable in the coincidence of this "Feast of Lights" with other religious celebrations. We naturally think of Christmas Day, the day on which we celebrate the birth of Christ, who called himself "the Light of the world." It is a remarkable fact also that the 25th of December was celebrated at Tyre and at Rome as the birthday of the sun, which has then just passed the winter solstice and begins to bring the longer days and shorter nights of the advancing year. It was the festival of the regeneration of the Jewish nation, which, like the winter's sun, had sunk to its lowest point under the oppression of its heathen rulers, and now again began to rise to a period of brightness and of life.

But the occupation of Jerusalem did not give peace to the conquering army or security to the righteous cause for which it contended. The whole horizon was full of the elements of danger. The Greek garrison still held the citadel. Edom, the old enemy of Israel upon the southern frontier, assumed so threatening an aspect that the first move-

ment of Judas in the campaign of the year 164 B. C. was turned in that direction. From the fortress of Beth-zur, where he had defeated Lysias the year before, and which he now occupied as an outpost, he sent out expeditions which inflicted terrible punishment upon the hated race. Turning northward, he transferred his forces, eight thousand in number, across the Jordan, where the Greek general Timotheus was closely besieging the people in their fortified towns. The plans of the enemy were laid for a simultaneous assault upon these various fortresses. At early dawn of the same day the scaling-ladders were planted and the battering-rams prepared, when, through the stillness of the morning, broke the well-known trumpet-blast, the signal of Judas the Maccabee. It was the fortress of Dathema (Ramoth-gilead) which he had reached at this opportune moment. The siege was raised, and, as usual, the besiegers fled before the "Hammer of the Gentiles."

The army of Timotheus was now withdrawn from the various besieged cities and was collected on the bank of one of the streams which fall into the Jordan from the east. His forces were increased by numbers of the wild Arab tribes occupying that region. It was agreed between Timotheus and his officers that if Judas and his forces should appear and pitch their camp upon the other side of the stream, and thus give signs of hesitation, it would then be expedient to cross the stream

and attack them. On the other hand, if Judas should take the initiative and make the assault, it would be impossible to withstand him, and it would be necessary to seek safety in flight.

When Judas appeared, with his usual impetuosity he dashed across the brook at the head of his whole army. The enemy, defeated in advance by their own decision, fled in disorder, throwing away their weapons in their flight. It is said that not a single Israelite perished in this encounter.

Laden with spoils, the victor recrossed the Jordan, bringing with him almost the entire body of the Jewish population which had occupied the eastern territory. He felt it a task unequal even to his great abilities to protect that exposed and distant section of the country. Before crossing the Jordan he had despatched his brother Simon to the north with three thousand men, who drove back the Grecian armies, compelling them to take refuge in the fortress Ptolemais on the Mediterranean Sea. Judas himself turned southward once more, wrested Hebron from the Edomites, penetrated the land of the Philistines, destroyed the idol altars of Ashdod and returned loaded with booty to Jerusalem.

And now the career of the fierce persecutor of the Jews, Antiochus, was coming to a close. He had failed in a profane attack upon a rich temple in the city of Elymais. His pride was deeply wounded by the failure. Returning to Babylon, he was further mortified by the news of the utter

failure of his generals and the defeat of all his armies in Judea. These disappointments undermined his health. He took to his bed, where, receiving constant intelligence of new misfortunes, he gave up all hope of recovering. A cancerous disease multiplied his sufferings. Remorse for his career of barbarity and outrage seized his mind. Gathering his friends around his dying bed, he addressed them in such words as these: "Behold the wretchedness and distraction of my last hours —I who once was so beloved and so glorious in my reign. Now I am compelled to reflect upon the evil which I have done to Jerusalem, and the attempts which I have made, without a cause, to destroy the inhabitants of Judea. It is for this that I suffer such grievous misfortune and die such a sorrowful death." Other accounts say that he completely revoked all his tyrannical edicts before he died. The last words of the eleventh chapter of Daniel are appropriate: "Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him."

When Lysias learned of his death he placed a son of the king, whom he had educated, upon the throne. To his name, Antiochus, he added the title Eupator. The true heir of the throne, however, was Demetrius, then a hostage of Rome.

CHAPTER XIV.

VICTORIES OF THE MACCABEES.

ALTHOUGH the great oppressor of the Jewish people was now dead, they were not to be left in peaceful enjoyment of the results of their victories. The heathen garrison still held the citadel of David at Jerusalem. While Judas gathered an army for the purpose of capturing this position, Lysias, the Syrian general, with equal zeal and activity assembled a vast host, reckoned at one hundred thousand foot and twenty thousand horse.

An element of strength appeared in this heathen army entirely new to the Jews. It was the presence of elephants in the ranks. These huge animals had been employed in war from ancient times in their native countries, but this was the first time in which they had appeared upon the soil of Judea. Each elephant was escorted by one thousand foot-soldiers and five hundred horse. Thirty-two of these animals were distributed among the forces of Lysias.

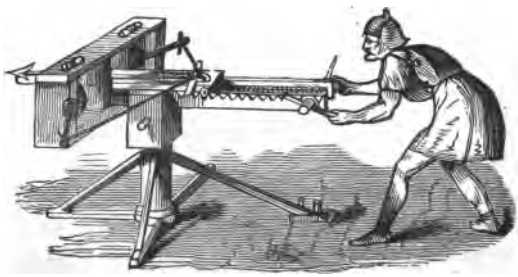
Advancing from the south, the first point of attack was the now famous fortress of Beth-zur. The whole Syrian army in radiant armor spread

over the mountains and valleys, so that the country glowed with the splendor of the sight. The wooden towers on the backs of the elephants were conspicuous objects. The shouting of the multitude, the trampling of men and beasts and the rattling of the armor inspired the beholders with terror. Part of the army occupied the hills and part pitched in the valleys. Their movements were orderly and cautious.

Judas and his little army drew near to attack. Wherever he led them the Israelites were invincible, but in this campaign his brother Eleazar met his death in performing a bold and singular act of daring. He singled out one of the elephants which, from its great size and the royal appearance of its equipments, he supposed to be that of the young prince himself. He fought his way through the hostile ranks, crept beneath the elephant, pierced its body with his sword and brought the huge creature to the ground. Eleazar himself was crushed to death by the fall. His daring act gave him the name by which he was afterward known, Avaran, "the beast-sticker."

However, Judas and his army found it the dictate of prudence to withdraw and to resume their former position behind the walls of Jerusalem. After a long resistance Beth-zur yielded and received honorable terms of surrender. Lysias now advanced upon Jerusalem and laid siege to that part of the capital which was in possession of Judas.

All the weapons of war were employed against the walls. High towers were erected; machines for hurling fire and stones were planted; weapons



THE CATAPULT.

which shot immense javelins, and others which threw immense stones almost with the force of cannon-balls, were employed by both sides in the fierce struggle. The besiegers made little or no headway.

But an enemy was within the walls. It was a time of scarcity, because it was the seventh or sabbatical year, in which the land was allowed to lie fallow and only scanty crops were gathered. The fugitives who had fled from other parts of the country before the heathen had drawn heavily upon the slender stores of provisions in Jerusalem. The garrison was scattered in the search for food, and only a small number remained to carry on the defence.

The besiegers, in their turn, began to suffer from

lack of provisions. News of an alarming character reached them from Antioch. The friends of Demetrius, the rightful sovereign, had taken possession of that city. The siege of Jerusalem was raised. A treaty was concluded. Full liberty of worship was granted to the Jews. All that the Maccabees had contended for was allowed. The Jews would henceforth be permitted to live according to their own laws.

Antiochus and his army were admitted to the city, but, contrary to his oath, he ordered the walls to be thrown down and the fortifications to be dismantled. This was his last act of tyranny and bad faith. His career was soon after cut short by the appearance of Demetrius upon the scene. Antiochus and his general, Lysias, were overpowered and put to death, and Demetrius became undisputed master of the kingdom, B. C. 163.

The policy of the new king toward the Jews was more wary than that of his predecessor. He appointed one Alcimus the high priest, and gave him supreme authority, but no sooner had Jerusalem submitted than Alcimus began a career of cruelty and bloodshed. Judas again took arms, and Alcimus was compelled to fly to Antioch. Demetrius now sent Nicanor with a great army to reinstate Alcimus.

This general, although sharing the general animosity of the Syrians against the Jews, was remarkable for cherishing a strong personal admiration

and affection for Judas Maccabæus. Upon the invitation of Nicanor, Judas came to Jerusalem and entered into a conference with the Syrian general. The two sat side by side on chairs of state. Nicanor was so fascinated that he could not bear to have Judas out of his sight. He entreated him to lay aside his wandering course, to marry and settle down in a quiet home.

It is said that Judas actually followed the advice of Nicanor—that he married and entered upon the ordinary duties of private life. But this state of things, if it ever existed, was of short duration. An order came from the king that Judas should be sent as a prisoner to Antioch. While Nicanor delayed Judas effected his escape, and the war was renewed. A battle took place in the plain of Sharon, in which Nicanor was defeated and compelled to retreat, with a loss of five thousand men, to Jerusalem.

The policy of Nicanor now changed to one of revengeful cruelty. He threatened that unless Judas was given up to him he would destroy the temple and erect in its place a temple to the odious Greek god Bacchus. His threats proving in vain, he was forced once more to take the field. The army of Judas was encamped among his native hills at the foot of the famous pass of Beth-horon. Only three thousand strong, it waited the appearance of the greatly superior forces of Nicanor. The prayer of Judas before the battle was in these

words: "When the messengers of the king of Assyria blasphemed thy name, O Lord, thine angel went forth and slew one hundred and eighty-five thousand of their host. So now smite this host before us to-day, that the remnant may know that they have spoken profanely against thy sanctuary, and do thou judge him [Nicanor] according to his wickedness." The priests too offered their prayers before the altar at Jerusalem, entreating that God would avenge the slight put upon his temple by the threats of the heathen governor. These prayers were answered to the letter. Not only did the battle go against the Syrian army, but Nicanor himself fell at the very opening of the conflict.

When the army of Nicanor saw that their leader had fallen they threw away their weapons and fled in disorder. The pursuit lasted a whole day. At the trumpet-call of the victorious Maccabees the people of the whole country-side came out and joined in the pursuit. They blockaded the passes and cut off the fugitives, so that it is claimed that not one of Nicanor's whole army escaped.

The body of Nicanor himself was recognized by its splendid armor, and when the victors, laden with spoil, returned to Jerusalem, the most conspicuous objects which they bore were the head and arm of Nicanor. After being held up to the gaze of the Greek garrison of the castle, the head was fastened to the fortress, and the hand which had been stretched out in defiance against the temple

was nailed to the gate of the inner court, which was afterward known as the "gate of Nicanor." The day itself, the 13th of March, was the day before the Feast of Purim, and was called Nicanor's Day.

Thus once more the temple was rescued from desecration, and the tide of heathenism which threatened to overwhelm the only true religion in the world was rolled back. Once more the God of Israel sustained his faithful and praying people in their stern resistance to the vast hosts of their oppressors.

Who can tell what the world and what civilization owe to these heroes and martyrs? Their efforts and their sacrifices shielded from utter extinction the feeble flame that burned on the altars of Zion, which was destined to be the source of the enlightenment of all mankind. The cruel princes and the great armies which plotted and fought for its overthrow, and the famous religions by which it was to be supplanted, long ago utterly perished; but the truth for which the Maccabees fought and fell has become the mistress of the world. "The stone which the builders rejected is become the headstone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing. It is marvelous in our eyes."

CHAPTER XV.

THE IRON KINGDOM.

B. C. 162. The Macedonian empire, founded by Alexander the Great, was the third in Nebuchadnezzar's vision as interpreted by Daniel. It was now about to give way to the fourth and last kingdom, which was represented in the image by the legs of iron. This was the empire of Rome, whose power was already felt by the line of kings at this time ruling over Syria. Judas Maccabæus, who was something of a statesman as well as a warrior, observed with interest the progress of this great power. He knew that he owed his own successes, in part, to the embarrassments caused to Antiochus by the advance of the Roman arms toward his own dominions. He had heard of their victories in remoter portions of the world—in Greece and in Spain. He had come to understand the popular form of their government, with which his own ideas were in sympathy.

The value of an alliance with so great a power was apparent, and although Judas had gained many brilliant victories over the oppressors of his country, it was folly to suppose that he had ren-

dered it secure against further attack. He determined to attempt to gain the friendship of Rome. Two persons were chosen, named Eupolemus and Jason, and were sent as ambassadors to the Roman Senate. Thus for the first time the Roman and the Jewish power were brought face to face.

According to custom, the Senate received the representatives of the insurgents in a full assembly.

There was little difficulty in negotiating an alliance. It is the policy of great and ambitious states to encourage divisions among the peoples whom they wish to conquer. The Roman historian Tacitus makes it the burden of his patriotic wishes that his country's enemies may never be at peace among themselves. An alliance, offensive and defensive, was formed, and the terms were inscribed on two sets of brazen tablets. One set was deposited among the archives at Rome, the other was carried to Jerusalem.

But it was not for Judas to reap the fruits of this alliance. It is believed that the stricter portion of the people, who had never heartily sympathized with the liberal spirit of Judas, were now offended, and even estranged from him, by these measures of friendship with a heathen power. Before the return of the embassy from Rome a Syrian army was again in motion. It was a mere handful that Judas could now rally against the twenty thousand foot and two thousand horse of the enemy. Out of a force of three thousand, at the most, only

eight hundred remained to follow their brave leader in his last military exploit.

B. C. 161. In vain was he urged to avoid the desperate encounter. "Far be it from me," he answered, "to turn my back upon the enemy. If our time has come, let us die like men for our brethren, and leave no reproach behind upon our memory."

So the battle was joined. Its locality is not definitely known. Judas, assailing the right wing with his usual impetuosity, broke its ranks, drove it upon the centre and put it to flight. But the left wing, advancing by the rear of the Maccabean army, surrounded it completely, and Judas fell, fighting gallantly to the last. The body of the great warrior was honorably delivered into the hands of his brothers, and was buried in peace by the side of his father in their native town of Modin.

For a time it seemed as if all the fruits of the Maccabean victories were lost. The jealousy of the more rigorous party of the Jews led to an open estrangement with the more liberal party. Alcimus, the high priest, who was supported by the Syrian government, and whose influence had broken up the friendship between Nicanor and Judas, now regained power and was recognized by the rigorous party because of his supposed descent from Aaron. While Alcimus thus held the temple, the Syrian general Bacchides occupied

all the fortresses of Judea. Jonathan, the youngest of the Maccabees, had a sharp encounter with Bacchides, but was compelled to fly, and swam across the Jordan to escape. He afterward returned and entrenched himself in the pass of Michmash.

Alcimus retained his place in the priesthood for two years. Although he enjoyed the sympathy of the stricter party, he courted the Syrian government, and undertook to modify the form of the temple-enclosure, apparently to adapt the structure to the tastes of his Gentile masters. Soon after this he suffered a paralytic stroke; remaining for some time speechless and a cripple, he died.

At the same time two rival claimants of the throne of Antiochus appeared—Alexander Balas and his cousin Demetrius. Each of these competitors sought the friendship of Jonathan. It was a strange reversal in the situation of the Jewish leader. But a little while ago a fugitive and a frequenter of caverns and clefts of the mountains, he now found himself courted by two claimants for the magnificent throne of the Seleucidæ. Demetrius made the most lavish offers. The Jews should enjoy exemption from all tribute and the right to immense revenues. Not only the city of Jerusalem, but the citadel itself, so long in the power of the Syrians, would be surrendered. All prisoners and captives would be set free. Full liberty of religious worship would be granted. An army of

thirty thousand Jews would be raised and officered by themselves, but paid by the king. The territory would be enlarged, and rich gifts were promised for the use of the temple and the restoration of the walls of the city.

But the Romans espoused the cause of Alexander, and Jonathan was wise enough to foresee that the splendid promises of Demetrius would never be fulfilled in the face of such an enemy. He, therefore, following the example of the Romans, espoused the cause of Alexander. Soon after (B. C. 150) Demetrius was defeated and slain. Shortly before this the important office of high priest had been conferred upon Jonathan. The line of Aaron had become extinct, and for seven years no one had exercised the functions of high priest. Either the office itself must be allowed to pass away or ceremonial scruples must be laid aside, and a new family, of the tribe of Levi, but not of the house of Aaron, must be chosen to continue the succession. And certainly none in all the nation was more worthy of the choice than the family of the Maccabees. Both Demetrius before his death, and afterward Alexander, confirmed the appointment of Jonathan, and thus he was called to minister in the sacred office.

It was on the festival of the Tabernacles (B. C. 153) that Jonathan assumed the priestly garments. As the friend of the king he surmounted his headdress with a golden crown, and at the same time,

it is added, he gathered his forces and prepared his weapons of war.

After the death of Demetrius, Alexander, the ally of Jonathan, continued to prosper. He asked and received the daughter of the king of Egypt in marriage. The wedding was celebrated at Ptolemais with royal festivities, Jonathan being one of the invited guests. Especial favor was shown him by Alexander, who caused him to sit by his side clothed in the royal purple, and who took that opportunity to make him an officer of his army and to add new territories to his domain.

The fallen Demetrius left a son bearing his own name, who now appeared with an army to claim the throne of his father. Jonathan showed his gratitude to Alexander by meeting and defeating him in the country of the Philistines. In this campaign he took Joppa and Askelon and burned the ancient temple of Dagon at Ashdod. But after the death of Alexander and his father-in-law, Ptolemy, Demetrius obtained the throne of Syria. Jonathan, who was surnamed "the Crafty," at first secured his friendship and gave him the support of his arms, but afterward went over to the party of his rival, Antiochus Theos. Demetrius was compelled to fly, and Antiochus obtained the throne.

The new king treated Jonathan with great distinction and confirmed him in his office of high priest. In return, the arms of Jonathan were actively engaged in the support of Antiochus. He

gained two victories over the armies of Demetrius, strengthened the fortresses in Judea, built a wall to shut off the citadel, which the Syrians had again occupied, in Jerusalem, and renewed the treaty with Rome.

But these were troublous times to the kings of Syria. Antiochus found a dangerous rival in his own general, Tryphon. Jonathan, as the friend of Antiochus, was the great obstacle in the faithless general's way. Unable to subdue him by force, Tryphon betrayed him by professions of friendship and offers of peace. In this manner securing possession of his person, for a long time he held him as a prisoner.

The capture of Jonathan, who never afterward regained his liberty, left his brother Simon as the sole representative of the Maccabean line. He was the next to the oldest of the five brothers. His father on his deathbed had designated him as suited by his superior wisdom and age to take the place of a father to the family. He soon showed that the Maccabean spirit dwelt in all its vigor in his bosom.

B. C. 143. When the Syrian usurper, Tryphon, gathered a great army and prepared to march upon Judea, Simon hastened to encourage his terrified countrymen. Coming to Jerusalem and summoning an assembly of the people, he addressed them as follows: "You well know what I and my brothers and my father's house have done for the

Law and the sanctuary, and what wars and troubles we have undergone. All my brothers have perished for your cause, and I alone survive. And now far be it from me to grudge my own life in any time of need, for I am not better than my brothers. Rather will I avenge my people and the sanctuary and our wives and children, for all the heathen are gathered to destroy us in their rage."

These words revived the spirit of the people, and they answered with a loud voice: "Be thou our leader instead of Judas and Jonathan, thy brothers. Fight our battles, and all you command will we do." Simon thereupon gathered all the people who were capable of bearing arms, and put the walls of Jerusalem into a condition for defence, and strengthened the city in every direction. He sent a detachment which took possession of Joppa and garrisoned the city.

Tryphon now advanced into Judea, bringing Jonathan with him as a prisoner. When he heard that Simon had taken the place of his brother, he sent a message offering to release Jonathan for the sum of one hundred talents of silver. Jonathan's two sons were also to be surrendered as hostages that the father would keep the peace when released. Simon had no faith in the treacherous general; nevertheless, to satisfy the people, he accepted the offer of Tryphon. The money and the hostages were sent, but Jonathan was never restored.

Simon now prepared to attack Tryphon, but a

great fall of snow, something very unusual in that region, prevented the combat, and Tryphon retired beyond Jordan, having first put to death his prisoner, the brave Jonathan.

By some means Simon contrived to recover the remains of his brother. He carried them to Modin, and laid them in the family burial-place. Over them he built a mausoleum of great size and remarkable appearance. On a lofty foundation of hewn stones he erected seven pyramids—one for each member of the family. Upon these he fastened specimens of the engines of war in use at that time. The whole was surrounded by lofty pillars, adorned with arms and military trophies and models of ships, intended to be an eternal memorial of the achievements of this great family. Situated on an eminence not far from the sea, it served as a landmark to navigators. For two centuries it endured in all its completeness, and for three centuries more its remains were easily distinguishable. But from that time almost to our own day all trace of the existence of the monument and of the village, and even of the name of the place, had disappeared. Recent explorers have identified Modin with a village called Medieh; but whether the tomb of the Maccabees has been found in the remains of large sepulchral vaults and broken columns in the neighborhood is as yet undecided.

But Simon not only raised a monument to his brothers; he sustained and advanced the glory of

the family by the success of his civil and military administration. The three strongholds of Syria in Judea fell successively into his hands. Newly-invented engines of war were employed in these operations. Beth-zur, the celebrated rock-fortress near Hebron, was garrisoned with Jews. More important than all, the hated heathen garrison at Jerusalem, which had so long overlooked the temple from its lofty citadel on the hill Acra, facing Moriah on the west, was compelled to capitulate, and Simon entered the coveted fortress with waving of palms and chanting of triumphal songs. This was on the 23d of April, B. C. 142. The fortress was dismantled and destroyed, and the very hill on which it stood leveled, so that it should no longer overlook the temple.

But Simon's achievements as high priest and civil ruler were of commanding importance in the history of the people. From his day begins a brief era of national independence. With him first the payment of tribute to the Persian rulers ceased. Henceforward all Jewish contracts were dated, "In the year of Simon the Great, high priest and general and leader of the Jews." With Simon also begins the era of national coinage. From the fourth year of his reign the coins bear his name and superscription. Their devices are emblems of the peace and plenty which he had restored—the cup, the vine, the palm and the lily. An era of happiness and prosperity was enjoyed by the long-

devastated country. The law was executed with impartiality and vigor. The temple was repaired and the sacred vessels restored. The labors of the husbandman were rewarded by the fertile soil. The old men sat in the streets and talked of the contrast between the present and former times, and the youth arrayed themselves in splendid apparel. With an eye to the advantages of commerce with the islands of the Mediterranean, the wisè ruler turned Joppa into a seaport and improved its harbor.

Mindful of the importance of the Roman alliance, Simon strengthened it by sending an embassy to the imperial city, which carried the splendid present of a golden shield one thousand pounds in weight. In return, the Romans proclaimed the alliance throughout all the Eastern World, and commanded all princes and cities to leave their friends the Jews undisturbed. When the ambassador of the king of Syria sent to Simon to demand tribute and indemnity for the important places which he had seized and occupied, he was met by an utter refusal, excepting only that Simon was willing to pay for the possession of Joppa. When war was threatened the two sons of Simon, Judas and John Hyrcanus, took command of the Jewish forces and utterly defeated the Syrian general.

B. C. 134. Simon had attained a great age, but, like all his brothers, he was destined to a violent death. His own son-in-law, Ptolemy, consented to

be the agent of Antiochus, king of Syria, in a plot for his destruction. He enticed Simon and his two sons, Mattathias and Judas, to a banquet in a fortress near Jericho. It was a great feast, and wine flowed in abundance. Ptolemy waited until his victims were overcome with drink; then, having removed their weapons, he slew them with their attendants.

The wife of Simon, who was with him, was made a prisoner. When John Hyrcanus hastened to avenge the murder of his father, Ptolemy had the venerable woman scourged upon the walls of the fortress in the sight of her son. Shocked at the spectacle, and fearing that worse treatment awaited her if he persisted, John raised the siege and withdrew. This act of consideration was in vain. Soon after Ptolemy completed his crime by the execution of the mother.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ASMONEANS.

WITH the death of Simon the last of his generation passed away. With that event also the name Maccabees ceased to be a title of the members of the family. The old family name of the Asmoneans now takes its place. But the Jews were not willing to see that illustrious generation pass away without raising a memorial to their great services to the country. Before the death of Simon they drew up a document testifying to the noble deeds of himself and his brethren. This document was engraved upon brazen tablets and placed in the treasury of the temple. Upon these it was inscribed that Simon should be the leader and high priest of the people for ever—meaning, of course, that the dignity should descend from generation to generation in his family. An important limitation was added: "Until a true prophet shall arise;" by which was intimated their hope in a coming Messiah, a greater deliverer than the Maccabees themselves.

"No one," continued the tablets, "either of the people or the priests, shall be allowed to erase any

part of this record; for it has pleased the whole people thus to determine and to do."

The written copy of this declaration was placed where it was accessible to Simon and his sons, and was of the nature of a constitutional guarantee of the rights of this family to the supreme power in Judea. John Hyrcanus, son of Simon, already known for his military exploits, succeeded his father B. C. 135. Little is known of his deeds, although for twenty-eight years he carried on the government with ancestral vigor and success. He rebuilt the fortress at the north-east corner of the temple and occupied it as a royal residence. The Syrian king Antiochus was his friend. He subdued the hated race of Esau, and destroyed the rival temple of the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim.

John Hyrcanus exercised the office of high priest, and even had the reputation of being a prophet. Nevertheless, he yielded in a culpable degree to the Greek and semi-heathen influences so damaging to the integrity and religious tone of the nation. His three sons bore the foreign names of Aristobulus, Antigonus and Alexander Jannæus. Although he ruled as high priest, he was the first of his family to assume the title of king.

Yet not all of his long reign was thus peaceful and glorious, nor did the Roman alliance entirely secure him against the attacks of the Syrians. Jerusalem had to stand a siege in which the inhab-

itants were reduced to the last extremity by famine. Hyrcanus was driven to the hard measure of expelling from the city a great number of the population too old or too young to render assistance in repelling the enemy. The besiegers refusing to let them pass through their lines, they wandered about between the two armies, and, wasting away by famine, nearly all perished. At the Feast of Tabernacles the survivors were received again within the walls. Hyrcanus sent an embassy to the Syrian camp, asking a truce of seven days while they celebrated the festival. Antiochus not only consented, but made a splendid contribution to the feast, consisting of animals for sacrifice, bulls with gilded horns, spices for incense and vessels of gold and silver. The Syrian army also observed the feast.

This extraordinary exhibition of sympathy was soon followed by a treaty of peace. The terms were severe: the Jews must deliver up their arms, tribute must be paid for Joppa and other captured cities, and a garrison must be admitted into Jerusalem. The latter hard condition was withdrawn, and a payment of five hundred talents of silver, with hostages for the fulfillment of the rest of the treaty, was accepted instead. One of these hostages was Hyrcanus's own brother. To obtain the necessary funds it is said that Hyrcanus opened the tomb of David and took from it three thousand talents.

Four years after this event Antiochus was over-

thrown and slain by his rival Demetrius. Hyrcanus seized the opportunity to throw off the Syrian yoke and to regain the independence of the Jewish kingdom.

About this time arose the two Jewish sects known in later times as the Pharisees and Sadducees. We have already seen how the stricter part of the people gave signs of dissatisfaction at some of the more liberal measures of the Maccabees. The Pharisees were the representatives of this feeling. Hyrcanus professed to belong to this more rigorous party, although his real sympathies tended in quite the opposite direction. Toward the close of his reign he gave a banquet at which the chiefs of the Pharisees were present. Hyrcanus took the occasion to renew his professions of attachment to them, yet, as if somewhat doubtful, he asked their judgment upon his conduct. With one exception they united in commending and endorsing him as a truly righteous man.

The exception was Eleazar, who declared that he had no right to the office of high priest, and intimated that there was a stain upon the legitimacy of his descent. The wrath of Hyrcanus at this reproach was increased when he found that the Pharisees proposed a punishment—comparatively light, indeed—for him as an offender. The result was his entire alienation from the rigorous party. Whether he became formally a member of the opposite or free-thinking party does not appear.

The name "Pharisee" is derived from the Hebrew word *pharez*, meaning to "separate," for the Pharisees were those who held themselves apart, as more righteous than the mass of their fellowmen. The Sadducees were so called from Sadoc, a presiding officer of the Sanhedrim, a prominent teacher of the peculiar views of the sect. They differed from the Pharisees in rejecting the traditions which the latter added to the law of Moses; nor did they observe the Law itself in all its minute particulars, as did the Pharisees. But the great defect in their doctrine was the disbelief in a future state of existence.

Into these two sects the great body of the Jewish people was from that time divided. The Sadducees made their converts chiefly among the rich, and were comparatively few in number, while the Pharisees secured the sympathy of the multitude.

At the death of Hyrcanus his oldest son, Aristobulus, succeeded to the throne. His reign was brief, but full of crime. He starved his mother to death because she claimed the right of succession from the will of Hyrcanus. He caused the death of Antigonus, his brother, and then died of horror and remorse. He was succeeded by his brother, Jonathan, called also Alexander Jannæus. His younger brother attempting to seize the throne, Alexander put him to death. During this reign the Jewish possessions embraced the whole region of Palestine, including the Med-

iterranean coast. The coins of Alexander bear an anchor, probably in commemoration of his maritime empire.

The Pharisaic faction now stirred up great disorders, and repeated to Alexander the reproaches which Eleazar had cast upon his father, Hyrcanus. Alexander took terrible vengeance, at one time slaying six thousand of his enemies in Jerusalem. For six years the country suffered all the horrors of civil war. Alexander was compelled to fly to the mountains. Again he became master of the whole country, and marched into Jerusalem in triumph. The scenes of vengeance already described were repeated, and the people were awed into submission under his iron sway. Four years afterward Alexander died, having reigned twenty-seven years. His death occurred in camp, while he was conducting the siege of a fortified post on the east of Jordan.

B. C. 78. His wife, Alexandra, in obedience to the dying counsels of her husband, made peace with the Pharisees, whom he had offended, and assumed without difficulty the reins of government. The Pharisees gave Alexander a sumptuous and honorable burial. His son Hyrcanus was made high priest. All prisoners and exiles who had been concerned in the civil war were freed and recalled. The Pharisees went farther, and demanded the punishment of all who had been accessory to the acts of vengeance of the late king. With dif-

ficulty their lives were spared on condition of leaving Jerusalem.

Alexandra reigned nine years, a period of comparative security and national progress. She was succeeded by her son Aristobulus, who only gained possession of the throne after a severe struggle with the Pharisaic party. The choice of the Pharisees was Hyrcanus, brother of Aristobulus. Hyrcanus fled to Aretas, king of Arabia, and persuaded him to send an army against his brother. Aristobulus was defeated and shut up in Jerusalem, and the siege was vigorously pressed by the Arabian army.

An old man named Onias had the reputation of having prayed for rain during a drought, and of having obtained an immediate answer. The party of Hyrcanus demanded his intercessions in behalf of their cause. The old man knelt down and uttered these words: "O God, the King of the universe, since on the one side are thy people, on the other thy priests, I beseech thee hear not the prayers of either to the detriment of the others." The disappointed populace flew upon the old patriot and stoned him to death.

The Feast of the Passover occurred during this siege of the city, and there were no victims within the walls to be sacrificed. The besieged made an agreement with the enemy that on payment of a certain price lambs should be furnished for the great national festival. They let down the money

in baskets from the walls, but the besiegers violated their contract and sent back the baskets either empty, or, what was worse, loaded with swine.

What might have been the result of the siege if the two contending parties had been left to fight it out cannot be surmised; but the interference of Rome settled it in favor of Aristobulus. A Roman army was now in Syria, and had just seized the ancient city of Damascus. Aristobulus and Hyrcanus both made offers of money to secure the aid of the Roman general, Scaurus. Aristobulus, being in possession of the temple and the treasury, appeared to the Roman the better able of the two to fulfill his promises, and this decided Scaurus to espouse his cause. He sent an order to Aretas to raise the siege. As he obeyed and withdrew from the city-walls, Aristobulus fell upon his rear and gave him a signal defeat.

B. C. 63. But the triumph of Aristobulus was short. Scaurus was but the lieutenant of the great Roman general Pompey. This hero of countless battles and victories, the most illustrious warrior since Alexander the Great, sought to extend still farther eastward the sway of Rome. Arrived at Damascus, the rival claimants to the throne of Judea laid their cause before him. Pompey treated both parties with great civility, but, perceiving that the weak Hyrcanus would offer fewer obstacles to his plans than the enterprising Aristobulus, he evidently leaned to the side of the former. After re-

peated attempts to negotiate, Aristobulus threw himself into Jerusalem and undertook the desperate course of armed resistance to the greatest military power and the most successful general in the world.

The Roman army was soon upon his track. Their route led them to Jericho, a city which in that day was famous for the richness of its tropical vegetation, its splendid forest of palms and its gardens of balsam so fragrant that the whole forest was filled with sweet odors.

The Roman soldiers were amazed and enchanted. As the shades of evening fell upon the encampment couriers were seen advancing from the north at the top of their speed, with branches of laurel fastened to the points of their lances. Evidently they bore some good news from Pompey. The troops gathered around their general, eager to learn the tidings. He sprang from his horse, and, mounting a hastily-constructed pile of earth and pack-saddles, he read aloud the despatch. It announced the death of Mithridates, the most powerful and dangerous opponent of the Roman power in the East. It was worth to Pompey more than the death of ten thousand ordinary enemies. A great shout of joy went up from the army, and the smoke of sacrifice and the noise of festivity spread over the whole camp.

The next morning the army, elated with triumph, ascended the rocky passes which led from the Jordan Valley to the hill-country of Judea.



ANCIENT JERUSALEM.

It was from the Mount of Olives, the point from which the most impressive view of the city can be obtained, that a Roman army first looked upon Jerusalem. They swept down the hill and passed around upon the western side, where the level ground afforded them opportunity for encampment.

Within the city-walls turbulence, jealousy and faction reigned. Aristobulus saw that resistance in such circumstances would be folly. Before striking a blow he went out with offers of submission and a promise of money to the Roman general. But when Pompey sent a party to take possession of the city he found the gates closed and the walls manned for defence. Indignant at this seeming treachery, he threw Aristobulus in chains and moved the whole army to the attack.

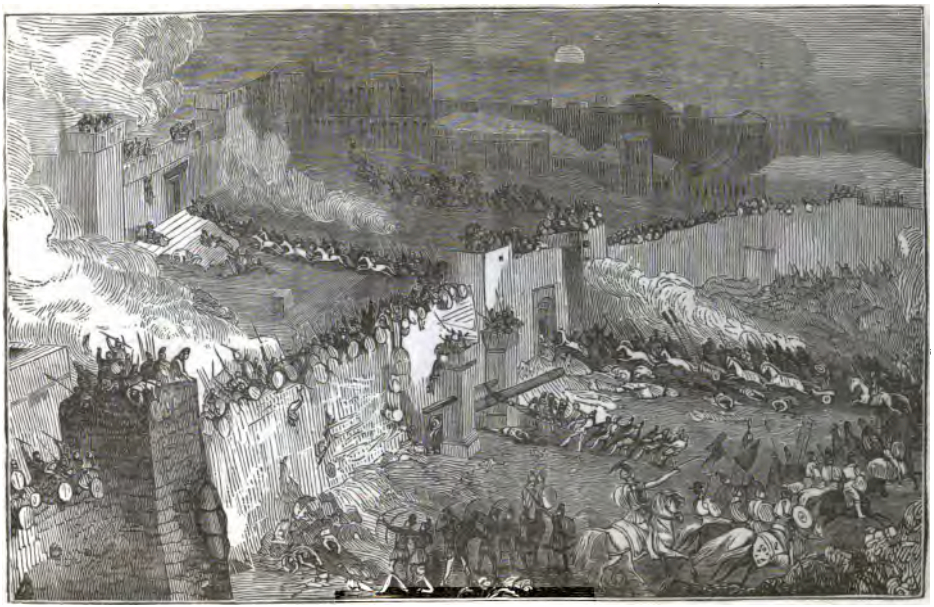
The faction of Hyrcanus succeeded in opening the gates to the Romans, and Pompey became master of the greater part of the city. But the friends of Aristobulus and the priests had possession of the temple, which was a fortress in itself. The bridges which connected it with the other parts of the city were broken down, and Pompey was compelled to lay regular siege to the place. He directed his attack upon the north side as the weakest—first, however, offering the besieged terms of peace. These being rejected, he pressed the siege with vigor.

For three months it was continued, and Pom-

pey's great military engines would have labored in vain for a still longer period but for the scruples of the Jews in regard to fighting on the sabbath day. Since the days of the Maccabees they had indeed held it as allowable to fight in self-defence and to repel a direct and immediate assault upon the sabbath, but they would not stir hand or foot to destroy the enemy's works or hinder his progress upon that day. The Romans therefore abstained from all attacks on the sabbath, but spent the day exclusively in carrying on their siege-works, in filling up the ditches and chasms around the temple, and in bringing forward and placing their engines in the best positions for attack.

At last the assault was made. A breach was opened by means of battering-rams, and the besieging army poured into the temple-area. In the carnage which followed no less than twelve thousand Jews perished. With a dignity not unlike that of the Roman senators themselves, the priests went on with the daily service in the midst of the horrid tumult and slaughter. Many of them, falling at their posts, mingled their blood with that of the sacrifices which they were offering. Others, robed in black sackcloth, sat immovable in their seats in the temple-court, as the Roman senators, two centuries before, retained their curule-chairs when confronted with the rude invaders from Gaul.

The Roman general, being now in possession of



CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM.

the Jewish sanctuary, was curious to penetrate the mystery of the place. He longed to behold with his own eyes the causes of its wonderful sanctity. He hoped to solve the question, often discussed, Who or what was the God of the Jews? On this subject infamous stories were afloat. It was said by some that they worshiped an ass's head; others declared that it was the venerable lawgiver of the race; others, that it was some god or goddess in human form, like those of Greece or Rome. Whatever it was, he expected to find it in the inmost recesses of the building which he had captured.

Entering the court of the priests, he beheld there the golden table, the sacred candlestick and the accumulated offerings from Jews in all parts of the world. He arrived at the curtain, beyond which none but the high priest could penetrate, and he on one day only in the year. Behind this veil he expected to find a solution of the mystery which surrounded the Jewish religion. He drew it aside and found empty space. The stone on which the high priest placed his censer was the only piece of furniture to be seen. It was a spiritual and invisible Deity that was the object of this national and elaborate worship. Whether he was impressed and solemnized by the idea of an unseen but present Deity we know not, but it is certain that he left the temple-treasures, amounting to two thousand talents, and all the valuable utensils, untouched. Retiring, he gave orders that the place should be cleansed and

purified, and that divine service should be carried on there in the usual manner.

But the Jews were deeply offended by this profanation of their sanctuary, although it was attended with far less outrage than the similar act of Antiochus IV. more than one hundred years before. It is, however, a matter of remark that with this act of profanation ended the victorious career of Pompey.

As a conclusion of this struggle he demolished the walls of Jerusalem, restored Hyrcanus to the priesthood, and instead of king made him prince of Judea. He put the country under tribute and reduced its boundaries to the narrow limits of Judea proper. Leaving Scaurus with two legions in Syria, he returned to Rome, carrying with him Aristobulus and his two sons, Alexander and Antigonus, and two of his daughters, as captives to grace his triumph in the streets of the capital.

This was the third and the greatest of Pompey's triumphs—the grandest that Rome had ever seen. In front were borne great placards displaying the names of the thousand castles and nine hundred cities which he had conquered, the eight hundred galleys captured from pirates and the thirty-nine cities refounded. Next followed the splendid spoils of the East. Then came the prisoners from various countries, each in his native costume. In front of the conqueror's car walked the three hundred and sixty-two captive princes of the East, and

among them Aristobulus, the king of Judea. It was the conquest of this country which seemed to make the deepest impression upon the Romans. Cicero in one of his letters styles Pompey "our hero of Jerusalem."

The humanity of the great conqueror—a rare quality among the military leaders of Rome—appeared in his treatment of these prisoners. Usually they would have been led away from the procession to be slain at the turn in the Via Sacra whence it ascended to the Capitoline Hill. They were sent back to their homes or remained in Rome to await their future fate.

Among these captives were great numbers of Jews, to whom an especial district in Rome was assigned on the right or western bank of the river Tiber. This was the beginning of a Jewish colony which for many years grew in numbers and in wealth. Although for the most part a despised and hated section of the population, they exercised no small influence upon their heathen neighbors. Many of them obtained the rights of Roman citizenship. Many Romans were proselyted to the Jewish faith. As in the case of Greece, the conquest of Judea brought Rome largely under the influence of her captives. It is a remark of Seneca in reference to the Jews that "the conquered gave laws to the conquerors" — *Victi, victoribus leges dederunt.*

In this community the Christian church of Rome

arose not long after the crucifixion of Christ. The mingling of Jewish and Gentile elements prepared the way for the reception of the gospel, especially as set forth in the famous Epistle of Paul to the Romans, in which the inspired writer shows how the saving work of Christ is equally adapted to the wants of both of these great divisions of mankind.

The work of Pompey thus, unconsciously to its author, was one of the important steps by which the way began to be prepared for the appearance and spread of Christianity throughout the world. The universal empire of Rome broke down all national barriers, the spread of the Greek language prepared a universal means of communication, and the presence of the Jews in Rome furnished a commanding position which afterward, being occupied by the Christian Church, gave every facility for reaching the remotest parts of the civilized world.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE HERODIAN FAMILY.

ARISTOBULUS and his son Antigonus had been carried as prisoners to Rome by Pompey, but managed to escape and return to Judea, where they made their refuge in one and another of the ruined and deserted fortresses. After many struggles Aristobulus perished by poison and his son Alexander was beheaded. During these conflicts the temple at Jerusalem was again visited by a famous Roman general, Crassus, who with Cæsar and Pompey formed what is called the First Triumvirate of Rome. He was distinguished more for his avarice than for his success as a military leader. Unlike Pompey, he did not spare in the slightest degree the accumulated treasures of the temple. Those treasures had been vastly increased since Pompey's visit. Gold poured into Jerusalem from the dispersed Jews in such quantities that Cicero, in one of his orations, complained of its disturbing effect upon the markets of the world.

When Crassus appeared at the doors of the treasury, the high priest, Eleazar, attempted to

appease him by a partial surrender. He offered a bar of gold of immense value concealed in a hollow beam of wood, the secret of which had been known only to the priest himself. This only whetted the appetite of Crassus. He pillaged without mercy. He emptied the treasury of all its contents. The amount of the spoil is put at ten millions of dollars—a vast sum, considering the greater value of money in those times as compared with ours.

Immediately after this wanton act of plunder Crassus set forth upon his unfortunate expedition against the Parthians. Misled by guides in the pay of the enemy, the Roman army was entangled in the plains of Mesopotamia and compelled to make a long and disastrous retreat. Twenty thousand were slain and ten thousand were taken prisoners. Crassus himself was killed, and his head was carried to the Parthian king Orodes, who caused melted gold to be poured into the mouth, saying, "Sate thyself now with that metal of which in life thou wast so greedy."

B. C. 47. An Edomite family now appears upon the scene. It will be remembered that the Edomites were conquered by the Maccabees. At that time they were also compelled to submit to circumcision, and were incorporated into the Jewish nation. A prince of the Edomites, named Antipater, held an honorable position in the court of Alexander Jannæus. A second Antipater was appointed by

Pompey, and afterward by Cæsar, to the high office of Roman procurator or governor of Judea.

The son of this Antipater was Herod, but widely celebrated as Herod the Great. To this son, Herod, Antipater committed the government of Galilee. A mere stripling he was—Josephus makes him but fifteen years of age—when thus placed in a most responsible and difficult position. Already, when a child at school, his greatness had been predicted by a monk, a member of the sect of the Essenes, who called him "King of the Jews." The child took it as a jest, and reminded him that he was only a private person, but the prophet slapped him on the back and said, "However that may be, you will be king, and will begin your reign happily; and I charge you to remember these blows as a sign that I foretold you. And I charge you to love justice and piety and mercy. But I know that such will not be your course. You will obtain a great reputation, and forget piety and righteousness. At the close of your life you will find that God has not forgotten your sins, and will punish you for them."

This prophecy was uttered by one Menahem, member of a sect of the Jews quite different from either Pharisees or Sadducees. They were hermits or monks, giving up their lives to contemplation and cherishing a more spiritual religion than either Pharisees or Sadducees. They took no part in the outward ceremonial of the temple. They had every-

thing in common. Their food was simple; their speech and manners were primitive. They dwelt in the recesses of the Jordan Valley and in the wilderness of Southern Judea. They had an excellent reputation for virtue, and many of them, says Josephus, "have been thought worthy of the knowledge of the divine purposes."

It is said that Herod quite forgot these declarations of Menahem until after he was really advanced to the dignity of a king. At the height of his power he sent for Menahem and asked him how long he would reign. Menahem at first was silent. Herod pressed him with questions. "Shall I reign ten years, or not?" he asked.—"Yes," replied Menahem, "twenty, nay, thirty years," but did not pretend to foretell the exact limit. Herod was satisfied, gave Menahem his hand and dismissed him. Ever after that he held the Essenes in honor.

The young Herod entered upon his office as governor of Galilee with abundant spirit. The country was overrun with robbers. His first act was to seize their leader, Hezekias, and slay him, with many of his robber band. This was a great benefaction to the whole country. The people could not say enough in their deliverer's praise.

Like a true descendant of Esau, he was a mighty hunter and renowned for his horsemanship. On a single day he is said to have killed in hunting no less than forty wild animals of the region—bears, stags and wild asses. In handling the military

weapons of the times his skill was the wonder of his generation. His person was magnificent. He had qualities of mind and heart well calculated to make him a great and popular ruler.

His culture and love of learning were probably beyond those of any Judean prince since the time of Solomon. The study of philosophy and history was his delight. His private secretary was Nicholas of Damascus, one of the greatest scholars of the age, author of a universal history in one hundred and forty-four books. Him he used to take with him on his long journeys, that by conversation on such subjects he might while away his time. He gloried in the splendors of architecture, and left monuments which place him in the first rank of the many great builders of that age. The proofs of his princely beneficence abounded not only in Palestine, but in the cities of Asia Minor and Greece as well. It is sad that the nobleness of his early youth and the magnificence of his public works should be almost completely blotted from remembrance by the unnatural and atrocious crimes of his later life.

The fame of his exploits in crushing the robber bands of Galilee resounded through Judea. It brought him also to the notice of Sextus Cæsar, a kinsman of the great Julius, at that time governor of Syria. But the relatives of the executed robbers managed to stir up a degree of public feeling against the youthful ruler, while others, jealous

of his exploits, called attention to the fact that Herod had acted without authority and had violated the laws in killing so many men without the form of a trial.

Herod was accordingly summoned to appear before the Sanhedrim, which now for the first time is mentioned in Jewish history. "The slave of the king of Judea," said Herod's enemies, "has committed a murder." But Herod did not assume either the manner or garb of a criminal. He came, a superb youth, in royal purple, his fine black hair dressed in the height of the fashion, attended by a guard of soldiers and holding in his hand a commendatory letter from Sextus Cæsar, the great emperor's cousin. Sextus was really concerned for the fate of the young prince, whom he greatly admired.

These demonstrations awed the Sanhedrim. None of his accusers appeared, and there was deep silence. Finally, one braver than the rest, Sameas or Shammai by name, rose and protested, not against the supposed crimes of Herod, but against the bravado of his bearing and the number of his attendants, which made it impracticable to execute any sentence which the Sanhedrim might pass. "Take notice," he said, "that as God is great this very man whom you are going to absolve and dismiss will one day return and punish you all." The prophecy came true. Herod afterward slew all the members of this body excepting Sameas himself, who mean-

while had been the means of admitting Herod into the city of Jerusalem.

The trial was deferred to another day, and as it was evident that sentence of death would be pronounced, Herod did not wait for the result, but fled from the city and took refuge in Damascus with his friend Sextus Cæsar.

B. C. 44. Meanwhile, Antipater, the father of Herod, though appointed governor of Judea by the Romans, still recognized Hyrcanus, who held the office of high priest, as his superior. In the general disorder which followed the assassination of Julius Cæsar the peace of Judea was greatly disturbed. Sextus Cæsar was also slain, and his place filled by Cassius, who laid excessive burdens of taxation upon the country. The whole population of some towns were sold as slaves to raise the money. A faction was formed against the Edomite family, and Antipater was slain by one Malichus, who had placed himself at the head of the movement. Herod made a bold push to occupy his father's place. He put to death the Jew Malichus, and in order to strengthen his chances for obtaining the kingdom he betrothed himself to Miriam, called Mariamne, the granddaughter of Hyrcanus. This would secure to him the prestige of a union with the famous Asmonean or Maccabean line.

He found a rival, however, in the person of another descendant of the Maccabees—in Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus II. (who had been carried

by Pompey as a prisoner to Rome), and therefore the nephew of Hyrcanus. While Herod courted the favor of the Romans, and sent large sums of money to Mark Antony after his victory at Philippi, Antigonus determined to risk his fortune with the enemies of Rome, the Parthians. The Parthian armies had just entered Syria, and Antigonus, having raised a considerable native force, entered Judea, fought his way to Jerusalem and was admitted within the walls.

Jerusalem was torn asunder by contending factions. Some sided with Antigonus, and some with Hyrcanus. Herod and his brother, Phasael, had also gained admission within the walls. The celebration of the Feast of Pentecost took place at this time, and brought multitudes of people into the city, who shared in these disputes and added fuel to the flames of party strife. The party of Antigonus held the temple, that of Hyrcanus the palace. The streets were bloody with the daily encounters.

Antigonus proposed that the contending parties should submit their differences to the arbitration of Pacorus, the Parthian general. The plan was agreed to, and Phasael, against the remonstrances of his brother Herod, with Hyrcanus placed himself in the power of the Parthian forces. Herod fled from the city, and took refuge first in Masada, and then successively in Arabia, Egypt and Rome. In the mean time Hyrcanus and Phasael were made prisoners. Phasael died in prison, and

Hyrcanus was mutilated by the removal of his ears, so that he could no longer fill the office of high priest. After this act he was allowed to withdraw to the colony of Jews who still inhabited Babylonia. By them he was hailed as high priest and king and loaded with honors.

The flight of Herod from Jerusalem was one of the most sorrowful and perilous events of his life. Indeed, instead of attaining the position of king of the Jews, it now seemed as if his career was about to come to an ignominious close. Mariamne, his betrothed, a woman of great spirit and ability, with her mother, who even excelled her daughter in sagacity, and other women of his family, including his two wives and their children, were with Herod at this time. Josephus says that it would have touched the heart of an enemy to have seen this weeping company of women and children as they left the city. Many of their own kindred remained behind them as prisoners, and they could expect nothing but peril and disaster upon their route through a country beset with their enemies.

A large force, computed at nine thousand men, including many unarmed persons, accompanied Herod in his flight. At first he seemed to rise above the misfortunes of his position; he cheered and encouraged the fugitives. Yet when an accident occurred, and the wagon carrying his mother was overthrown, he was quite unmanned by concern for her life, and from fear lest the delay should

allow the enemies who were in pursuit to overtake the party. Drawing his sword, he would have killed himself, and thus shamefully have left the whole party to their fate. But the attendants laid hands upon him and restrained him, saying that it was not the part of a brave man to free himself from distress and abandon his friends who were in the same plight.

He had more than one encounter with Parthians and with Jews. The latter especially fell upon him when but seven or eight miles upon his journey, and fought hand to hand with him. However, he put them all to flight, and arrived in safety with his whole party at the strong fortress of Masada in the hill-country west of the Dead Sea. There he dismissed the greater part of his company, retaining about eight hundred followers as a garrison for the fortress. Leaving there his wives and other members of his family, and seeing that they were well supplied with provisions and water, he departed for Arabia.

The king of Arabia, Malchus, had formerly received favors from Herod, which now emboldened him to ask a loan or a gift of money, by which, if possible, to ransom his brother from the Parthians. But Malchus, pretending to be afraid of the Parthians, refused Herod's request; whereupon he made all haste to leave the country, and came into Egypt, intending to sail by the first opportunity for Rome. Cleopatra, the famous

queen of Egypt, in vain endeavored to detain him there. Regardless of the stormy weather, he set sail from Alexandria, and although shipwrecked on the way he at last accomplished the wished-for journey and found himself in the capital city.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HEROD THE KING.

ARRIVED at Rome, Herod sought an audience of Antony, and informed him of the events which had brought him to the city—how the Parthians had supported Antigonus in his attack upon Jerusalem; how, after many hardships, he had escaped from their hands, being compelled to leave the members of his family shut up in a lonely fortress, while he himself hastened to Antony as his only hope and dependence. Antony, mindful of favors which he had received from the father of Herod, and angry with Antigonus for forming an alliance with the Parthians, the enemies of Rome, needed no persuasion to espouse the cause of Herod.

A meeting of the Senate was convened. It was Herod's intention to plead the cause of Aristobulus, the brother of his intended wife Mariamne, rather than his own, although it can scarcely be doubted that the ultimate object of his ambition was to be himself the king of the Jews. But Antony at once put forth the claims of Herod, and represented to the Senate that to make him the king of the Jews would be a wise stroke of policy as against

the plans and advances of the Parthians in that quarter of the Roman empire. By a unanimous vote of the Senate the proposal of Antony was approved, and a decree was passed accordingly. He who had entered Rome a friendless fugitive departed from it a king. As he left the Senate chamber the two triumvirs, Antony and Octavian, took their places, the one on his right hand and the other on his left, and, followed by a train of consuls and magistrates, proceeded to offer up sacrifices and to deposit their decree in the Capitol. The day was closed with a feast given by Antony to the newly-made king.

But Herod wasted no time in hanging upon the court or indulging in the luxuries of Rome. With characteristic energy he despatched all his business in the space of a week. Returning by way of Brundusium and the sea, he reached the coast of Judea after an absence of but three months.

As soon as he landed he gathered an army. The Roman general, Silo, joined him with a number of soldiers. It was necessary for him to move promptly, for Masada, the fortress in which his family had been placed, was closely besieged by the army of Antigonus. Although the place was well provisioned, the supply of water had nearly given out. He moved down the coast, capturing Joppa on the way. The relief of Masada followed as a matter of course.

This done, Herod turned northward toward

Jerusalem. His army was now large and powerful. Many recruits from the surrounding country fell into the ranks. The ambuscades laid by the soldiers of Antigonus, for which the broken face of the country afforded ample opportunity, were repulsed without difficulty, and soon the combined Roman and Jewish forces sat down before the oft-besieged walls of Jerusalem. Herod early issued a proclamation to the defenders of the city, declaring that "he came for the good of the people and for the preservation of the city, and not for purposes of revenge, even against his worst enemies; he was ready to forget the injuries which his greatest adversaries had done him."

Antigonus issued a counter-proclamation, declaring both to the Romans and the Jews in Herod's army that it would be an act of gross injustice to give the kingdom to Herod, who was only a private citizen and but half a Jew. They ought to bestow the honor upon one of the royal family, meaning the Maccabees; and if not upon himself, there were other members of the family who had done nothing to offend the Romans, and who ought not to be set aside for a stranger.

Hostilities were confined for a time to skirmishes between foraging-parties and bands of soldiers sent out by Antigonus to oppose them. This was especially the case in the neighborhood of Jericho, so that Herod was compelled to send a force and occupy that city. The inactivity was also partly due

to the treachery of the Roman general Silo, who took bribes from Antigonus, and finally withdrew the Roman contingent from the city-walls and placed them in winter quarters. Finding it impossible to reduce Jerusalem, Herod bethought himself again of the robbers of Galilee, and entered upon a vigorous campaign, in the hope of ridding the country entirely of this great nuisance.

The resorts of these robbers were mountain-caves opening upon the sides of deep and almost inaccessible chasms, concealed from the observation of passers-by and safe from all ordinary methods of attack. Here they dwelt with all their families about them. These were their places of refuge whenever hard pressed by the officers of justice. The great ravine now known as the Wady Hamam, which runs from the hills of Galilee to the Sea of Galilee, afforded them their strongest places of refuge. But they had now to deal with one not easily foiled or discouraged in his undertakings—a man of uncommon ingenuity and daring. When he had driven the robbers to their retreats he found means of following them up and attacking them there. He had a number of large and strong chests constructed and surrounded with iron chains. These he filled with soldiers and let down by machinery from the top of the mountain until they were on a level with the mouth of the cave which he was attacking. Besides their usual arms, the soldiers were provided with long hooks. Those

whom they could not reach with other weapons they pulled out with these hooks and let them fall into the chasm, where they were dashed to pieces on the rocks below. Fire also was thrown from the chests into the caves, and sometimes the soldiers leaped into the caves and fought hand to hand with the occupants.

Dreadful and bloody were these struggles in mid-air, as if it were some species of wild animal or bird of prey that Herod's soldiers were hunting. Sometimes the chests had to be lowered to great depths, and the whole process was hazardous to those engaged in it. But the spectacle was so unexpected and so terrible to the robbers that those who were not attacked, hearing the outcries of their friends and feeling that their case was desperate, were ready to surrender when Herod offered pardon to all who would submit. The work was not abandoned until all the caves were cleared of their noxious inhabitants.

Antigonus meanwhile retained possession of the city. Herod, not having sufficient force to capture it, once more applied to Antony, who was now besieging Samosata upon the river Euphrates, for assistance. He did not come unattended, but led a considerable body of troops through a hostile country as auxiliaries to Antony. He put to flight an ambuscade upon the road in such a vigorous manner as to win the applause and gratitude of his men. Antony heard of this exploit, and received

him with every demonstration of respect, and as soon as he had captured the place which he was besieging he put the army, with Sosius the general, at the disposal of Herod.

Meanwhile, the whole country had risen against him. Antigonus not only maintained his position, but sent out detachments in various directions, which Herod was compelled to meet. He was in every case successful in his encounters. The third year after he had been made king he married Mariamne, and as the spring approached he assembled his army before Jerusalem and made vast preparations for the siege. His forces, united to those of Sosius, amounted to eleven legions—about sixty thousand infantry, with six thousand horsemen.

Herod's siege-works embraced three lines drawn around the city, interspersed with towers and supplied with the usual engines of war. He met with a brave resistance. Bold sallies were made by the besieged. His engines were burned. When he battered down a piece of the wall he found a new one erected behind it. When he attempted to dig mines beneath the walls the besieged also dug mines and met and fought their enemies underground. Nevertheless, in forty days an entrance was made, and in fifteen more a part of the temple was occupied and some of the buildings were burned.

In the midst of the conflict the priests asked that they might be permitted to bring in through

the lines the beasts necessary for the daily sacrifice. Herod, hoping that they intended to yield, granted the request, but when he found himself mistaken he ordered a general assault upon the city, which was taken by storm. So great was the slaughter which followed that Herod was compelled to interfere. He remonstrated with the Roman general, and asked him whether the Romans would empty the city both of money and of people and leave him to be king of a desert. With something of his old generosity, he said that he esteemed the dominion over the whole habitable earth as by no means an equivalent satisfaction for such a murder of his citizens.

When Sosius replied that the soldiers must have their plunder, Herod offered to pay them out of his own money. He also by entreaties, threats, and even force, restrained the crowd from rushing into the temple and profaning the sacred places. He afterward fulfilled his promise to Sosius by giving a present to every soldier and one of great value to Sosius himself. In this manner he saved the city from destruction and won for himself a place in the regards of the people and the priests.

Antigonus was utterly humbled by this defeat. He begged his life in a mean and abject manner from the Roman general. The hard-hearted Roman felt no compassion for his captive. He received him with insulting laughter. He called him Antigone, changing his name into that of a woman.

Yet he granted his request so far as to send him in chains to Antony, who was at that time in Antioch. Herod, knowing that the Jews as a nation would never recognize his claims to the throne so long as a member of the Asmonean family survived to be his rival, meanly persuaded Antony to put him to death. Antony had intended to keep him to grace his triumph in Rome, but Herod backed his request by immense presents, the spoils of his wealthier enemies captured at Jerusalem and pillaged from the bodies of the dead as well as from the living.

Antigonus was put to death with indignities which never before had been shown by the Romans to a king. He was scourged like a convicted criminal and beheaded by a common lictor. Thus ignominiously perished the last ruler of the renowned Asmonean family. Thus a new blot was put upon the annals of the Roman empire by an act of inexcusable cruelty toward the representative of a line whose character and deeds would have added lustre to the brightest page of her history.

But the death of Antigonus did not relieve Herod of the opposition of his friends. A strong feeling prevailed in favor of the Asmonean family, and against Herod as an alien from the blood of Israel. The faction of Antigonus was strong in Jerusalem. Herod's position was indeed secure, but far from peaceable. A cruel nature could easily in his circumstances be persuaded of the

necessity of the severest measures. Forty-five leading men of the Asmonean faction were put to death and all their property confiscated. It was at this time also that the whole Sanhedrim was sacrificed excepting Sameas, who had so boldly reproved Herod on a previous occasion, and Pollio. These two had endeavored to persuade the people to capitulate to Herod during the last siege of the city.

Although Herod felt secure in his position as king, he would not venture upon the rash policy of assuming the additional dignity of high priest. That was a step which could never have been tolerated in an Edomite. Hyrcanus, the last of the line of high priests, was still living, but incapacitated from holding the office by the mutilation to which he had been subjected. Herod invited him from his honorable retreat in Babylonia to the troubled scenes in Jerusalem. He professed to place him by his side upon the throne, called him "his father," and gave him every outward privilege which he had previously enjoyed excepting that of the high priesthood.

The motive of Herod in this act was probably to soothe the feelings of the Asmonean party and to prepare the way for setting aside the claims of the family to the succession in the line of high priests. For that honorable position Herod named a Babylonian Jew, a personal friend, named Hananel, a man of unquestionable priestly descent. But even this was too bold an invasion of the traditional

feeling of the Jews. Herod's brother-in-law, the brother of Mariamne, the young Aristobulus, was the person upon whom the popular choice fell, and whose rejection by Herod was the more astonishing from the close connection in which he stood to the young man. The mother of Aristobulus, the shrewd Alexandra, set her wits to work to procure the advancement of her son in spite of the opposition of Herod. She wrote to Cleopatra, and sent pictures of Mariamne and her son—who were probably two of the most beautiful persons of their day—to Antony, and besought his interference in behalf of her son.

Herod was alarmed, and before Alexandra's schemes were completed withdrew his candidate and advanced Aristobulus to the high priesthood. But when he saw that all hearts were captivated with the beauty and the grace of the young priest in performing the high duties of the office, all the dark suspicions and fears of his nature were aroused. The boy of seventeen was a dangerous rival to the king. On her part, too, Alexandra began to fear for the safety of her son. She privately consulted with Cleopatra, who advised her to fly from Jerusalem and bring her son with her to Egypt.

This advice she accepted, and in order to hide her plans she had two coffins made, got into one herself and had her son put into the other, and gave orders to trusted servants to carry them away

in the night. She hoped to reach the seashore, where there was a ship ready to carry them into Egypt. But her plan unfortunately became known to Herod, who intercepted the party in the midst of their preparations. He feared that if the young man got beyond his reach he might cause him trouble without as well as within the boundaries of the kingdom. But so long as Aristobulus lived and continued to receive the marks of popular favor Herod felt himself unsafe. While bathing in a pond near Jericho, Herod enticed him into deeper water, where one of the attendants, by the order of Herod, drew him beneath the surface and held him until he was drowned.

His mother cautiously refrained from manifesting her extreme sorrow, and consoled herself in the hope of future revenge. Herod pretended that the death was an accident, and put on every appearance of affliction. He provided a magnificent funeral, burying a great quantity of spices and many ornaments with the body, so that not a few persons were deceived into a belief of his sincerity. Not so the bereaved mother. She again applied to Cleopatra, this time with so great effect that Herod was in imminent danger of punishment for his crime. By the persuasions of Cleopatra, who at this time had boundless influence over Antony, he was summoned to appear before Antony at Laodicea.

Herod was alarmed, but not dismayed. Armed

with immense bribes, he prepared to obey the summons. He left his uncle Joseph in charge of the kingdom, and further revealed the horrid traits of his character by giving Joseph a secret charge, that if he should fail in his mission to Antony and lose his life, he should kill Mariamne, his wife, immediately. The incautious Joseph revealed this secret order to Mariamne, and when a rumor spread that Herod had actually been slain by Antony, Mariamne and her mother took measures to secure the royal authority.

The rumor was false. The truth was exactly the opposite. Herod had been received by Antony as a king and as an officer of too lofty a rank to be subjected to any inquiry into the affairs of his government. Antony heaped honors upon him; he placed him at his side in his public duties as well as at his table. Herod returned to Judea more firmly established upon the throne than before.

The plans of Mariamne and her mother during his absence were revealed to Herod by his sister Salome, who added other stories affecting the reputation of his wife. Herod's jealousy was aroused, and when Mariamne referred to the order which he had left with Joseph, he flew into such a transport of passion that he was almost ready to kill her. Although he did not proceed to this length, his mind continued to be torn between the contending passions of love and jealousy. He vented his wrath upon Joseph, whom he ordered to be slain,

and upon Alexandra, whom he ordered to be imprisoned.

B. C. 31. Herod's friend Antony lost his power at the battle of Actium, and soon afterward died by his own hand. The great Augustus Cæsar now ascended the throne of universal empire. As the enemy of Antony, Augustus might well be expected to be the enemy of Antony's friends, among whom was Herod. But Herod had taken no active part in the struggles which led to Antony's defeat, and therefore had not merited any special hostility from Augustus. Herod resolved upon the bold measure of going in person to meet the conqueror at Rhodes. Before leaving his kingdom, however, he determined upon some precautionary measures marked by the cruelty which had become his leading characteristic. Hyrcanus, now eighty years of age, was accused of treasonable correspondence with the Arabian king, and was put to death. Herod sent his mother, sister and children to the fortress of Masada; in another fortress he placed Mariamne and her mother, commanding the attendants, as he had done on a previous occasion, to put Mariamne to death if he should be slain.

He then set sail for Rhodes. Laying aside his diadem, he appeared before Augustus—not, however, in the attitude of a suppliant, but with such dignity as might be inspired by true greatness of soul. He frankly admitted his friendship for Antony, and spoke reproachfully of his own deficiency

toward his unfortunate friend. He had, indeed, as a friend given Antony the best advice—advice which, if he had taken it, would have made him formidable to Augustus. He had urged him to put Cleopatra to death as the only way to escape from her arts and blandishments, and then to resume the war with vigor. But Antony preferred his own rash counsels—an unfortunate course for him, "but profitable," said Herod, "for you. These things I cannot be ashamed to own. But if now you care to have me for your friend, you may depend on the same firmness and fidelity which I have shown to Antony."

The boldness and frankness of Herod's tone redeemed it of much of its appearance of time-serving. The truly generous nature of Augustus was won by the appeal. "Antony did well," said he, "in refusing your advice, since by this means we have gained you for our friend. You shall be a king more firmly than before, as you well deserve to be." With that he placed the diadem upon his head, and by proclamation confirmed him as king of Judea. Thus the danger which his partisans had feared and his enemies had hoped would befall him, not only passed away, but left him stronger in his position than ever. He who had been honored with the friendship of Antony was equally the friend and ally of Antony's enemy, the most splendid and powerful of all the rulers of Rome.

Soon after this interview Augustus visited Palestine, and was met by Herod at Ptolemais with royal magnificence. He loaded the Roman army with presents, and supplied it abundantly with provisions, water and wine. To Augustus himself he made a present of eight hundred talents, exceeding by the lavishness of his gifts the resources of the region over which he ruled. In recognition of this princely treatment the emperor restored to him certain districts formerly bestowed on Cleopatra, in the south-eastern and northern parts of the country.

But nowhere was the contrast between outward splendor and private and domestic unhappiness more striking than in the case of Herod. Dazzling at once his enemies and his admirers by the glory of his public position, he was the victim of the darkest suspicions, hatreds and jealousies at home. Mariamne had learned that Herod's murderous plans in regard to herself were repeated before going to his interview with Augustus at Rhodes. On his return she met him with the coldness and disdain which such conduct might well inspire. She refused to be interested in his glowing account of the favor and friendship which he had experienced at the hands of the great Augustus. Herod's indignation would have been extreme but for the deep hold which her beauty had upon his affections. Entangled thus between hatred and love, he did not dare to inflict punishment which

would have been natural to him, lest he should punish himself still more severely.

But Herod's evil nature was not left to the uncertain results of its own struggles. Close by his side was a tempter in the person of his sister Salome. The high-spirited Mariamne had been too willing as a Jewess of priestly line to show her contempt for the members of her husband's family. Her contempt had been returned by bitter hatred, which ripened into plots of the darkest hue. Salome had previously filled her brother's mind with suspicion, and now she watched every opportunity of inflaming his resentment. When Mariamne reproached Herod with his conduct toward her own relatives in such manner as to rouse his worst passions, Salome added new fuel to the flames by accusing Mariamne of a plot to poison her husband.

Herod ordered the parties who, according to Salome, were concerned with his wife in the plot to be put to the torture and slain. Mariamne was summoned before a tribunal of judges, and tried upon the charge which had been preferred by Salome. It was a pure piece of calumny, as doubtless all the judges were aware. But Herod's passion overpowered their better judgment, and in accordance with his wishes she was sentenced to death. Yet Herod hesitated to take this final step, and would have imprisoned her in one of the fortresses instead. But his sister and mother

prevailed over his scruples, and procured from him the fatal order for her execution.

The conduct of Mariamne in this crisis was in marked and honorable contrast to that of her own relatives and the relatives of Herod. Her mother, a purely selfish woman, abandoned her daughter and loaded her with reproaches as she was led to execution. She cried out to her that she had been ungrateful to a kind and beneficent husband, and that she deserved her punishment for her insolent behavior. But while the spectators were horror-struck at such unnatural and hypocritical conduct, the queenly Mariamne passed her by with a calm indifference. "She smiled a dutiful though scornful smile." She made no attempt to clear herself either to the king or to her wretched mother. With unshaken firmness, with unmoved countenance, and even with unchanged color, she died, worthy of the noble line of the Maccabees.

This, though not the last, was the worst of Herod's cruelties; and such he himself felt it to be. He became the victim of remorse as intense and as agonizing as his anger had been violent. No sooner was Mariamne dead than his soul was torn with the stormiest passions. All his old affection for his wife was revived. It seemed as if the divine vengeance was executed upon him without a moment's delay. By day and by night her image haunted his mind; he called her by name; he constantly burst into passionate tears; he com-

manded his servants to call for her as if she were still alive. No diversion could calm him. He plunged into society; he contrived great feasts. On pretence of hunting he buried himself in the deepest solitudes.

A pestilence broke out which carried away many of his most esteemed friends, and which men naturally attributed to the anger of God. Herod himself was seized with an obstinate and dangerous disease, accompanied with delirious symptoms. The restless Alexandra, Mariamne's unnatural mother, took this opportunity to plot for the attainment of power in the event of Herod's death. But Herod was sane enough to understand and act upon the intelligence of these movements which was brought to him by his friends. He gave orders that she should be seized and put to death.

Gradually Herod regained his health, but a gloom seemed to have settled upon his soul—the curse which never afterward left him of the murder of Mariamne. No touch of true penitence softened the horror of his remorse. He knew nothing of "godly sorrow," which "worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of." His was "the sorrow of the world," which "worketh death." His propensity to cruelty and bloodshed seemed to have acquired new fierceness as victim after victim fell before his anger or suspicion.

CHAPTER XIX.

HEROD AS A BUILDER.

MARIAMNE left two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, the objects for a time of Herod's vehement affection. They bore in their persons the stamp of nobility which was apparently inseparable from the Maccabean line. To these natural advantages the father added all that an education in Rome could bestow. They became inmates of the household of Pollio, the friend of Virgil, and doubtless found opportunities of intercourse with the poet himself. The name "Pollio" belongs to that one of Virgil's *Eclogues* which reads like a prediction of the reign of the Messiah.

On their return from Rome their father arranged for them the most important matrimonial alliances. Alexander was married to the daughter of the king of Cappadocia, and Aristobulus to his father's cousin, Bernice. The attractiveness of their persons, the grace of their manners and the honorable traditions which they represented gave the brothers a popularity dangerous in the eyes of the intriguing courtiers and relatives of their father. They themselves were not insensible to these advantages, nor

did they hesitate to speak, as high-spirited youth might, of the crime which had robbed them of their mother. Most faithfully did they cherish her memory, and in the unreserved expression of their regrets for her loss the guilty plotters and sharers in the murder heard their own future sentence, sure to be executed when the sons of Mariamne should sit upon the throne of their father.

Thus a new cloud began to gather around Herod's household, already wrapped in the deepest gloom. Strife, mourning and murder were in the air. It was crime bringing its own punishment in new crimes of the same tragic nature. The spirit of the injured Mariamne seemed to hover over the devoted house. The innocent and the guilty were about to be involved in the common ruin. The home of the murderous Herod became the perpetual scene of misery and bloodshed. For years the insinuations against his sons failed to influence the mind of their father. But the enemies of the young princes were as unscrupulous as they were untiring.

While these domestic storms were gathering Herod was pursuing a public policy which deserves our attention, and which will in a measure relieve the dark colors of the picture which we have just been contemplating. He reminds us of Antiochus IV. (Epimanes) by his efforts to destroy the distinctions between the Jewish people and the other nationalities comprising the Roman empire, yet he differed from that madman in outwardly professing

the utmost respect for the religion of the Jews. It was his endeavor not to force, but to reconcile them to the foreign customs which he introduced. This was really a more dangerous method than the brutal and violent measures which in a former generation roused the splendid courage of the Maccabean leaders.

He built a theatre within the walls of Jerusalem and a great amphitheatre without the walls. He appointed Grecian games to be celebrated with great splendor every fifth year in honor of the emperor Augustus. He issued proclamations to the neighboring nations to join in these festivities; he invited famous gymnasts of every country to take part in the contests, and offered prizes of great value to the victors. He proposed chariot-races, the chariots to be drawn by four, six or eight horses. He spared neither money nor pains to rival the most costly and magnificent of these performances as witnessed among other nations. He gathered great numbers of lions and other wild beasts, which were to fight with each other or with criminals condemned to death, after the manner of the barbarous spectacles of the Roman Colosseum.

Foreigners, indeed, were greatly surprised and delighted at the vastness and magnificence of these shows, but thoughtful Jews looked on in horror at exhibitions so contrary to the spirit of their institutions and so dangerous to the moral character of the nation. But, what was a far greater offence in

the eyes of the people, Herod had adorned the walls of the theatre with inscriptions in honor of the exploits of the Roman emperor, and with trophies or complete suits of armor representing the nations whom he had conquered in his wars. These trophies, made of gold and silver, were supposed by the people to be meant for statues, and were regarded as a violation of the letter of the second commandment: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." Ever since idolatry had been abolished the Jewish people were excessively sensitive upon this subject. They cried out to Herod that while they might bear all the rest of his innovations, they would never tolerate images of men in their city; and it was only after Herod had the armor removed, and showed the people that the trophy was nothing but a bare peg of wood upon which the pieces of armor were suspended, that they acknowledged themselves mistaken and ceased their opposition.

But Herod's whole policy continued to be a source of the profoundest displeasure. Ten men of Jerusalem took a solemn vow that at any and every cost they would compass the death of Herod. With daggers under their cloaks they entered the theatre, expecting to meet Herod there and to despatch him on the spot. But one of Herod's detectives discovered the plot, and the conspirators were seized and put to death. They died boldly, maintaining that their conspiracy was a holy and

pious action—that they had not been influenced by passion, but by devotion to the customs of their country, for which any Jew ought to be willing to die. Herod's spy was discovered by the Jews, and was seized and torn to pieces by the populace and his body given to the dogs. This was done in public, yet for a long time Herod failed to discover the perpetrators. When they were found out they were punished in the true Herodian style; not only themselves, but their whole families, were destroyed.

The popular feeling toward Herod as an innovator was now too plain to be misunderstood. To guard more effectually against an outbreak, Herod rebuilt the old fortress which the Syrian garrison had so long occupied in Jerusalem, and called it Antonia. This great building was a palace, a fortress and a watch-tower combined. It was built at the north-west corner of the temple-area, and was half the size of the temple itself. Standing upon a rock fifty cubits high, its walls arose forty cubits above this chasm. Within it was finished in luxurious style; it was divided into apartments of every kind, furnished with baths and with every luxury necessary to a palace. There were broad spaces suitable for barracks.

Josephus describes Antonia as resembling a city from its size and the number of its conveniences. At each of its four corners rose a tower; three of these were fifty cubits in height, while the fourth,

which adjoined the temple, rose to the height of seventy cubits, or about one hundred feet. From this the whole temple could be overseen. Flights of stairs also led down from this tower into the temple-area, through which the garrison could easily command and control the people and repress the disorders that were so likely to occur in connection with their feasts. From this tower alone could the temple be reached from Antonia. It was down these stairs that the Roman soldiers came to rescue Paul from the Jewish mob which was about beating him to death, and it was from these stairs that Paul addressed the multitude so long as order could be maintained. Wishing to render the position as far as possible impregnable, Herod faced the lofty precipice upon which the tower was built with stones so smooth that they furnished no foothold to an assailant. Thus the fortress commanded the temple, while the temple itself, a fortress as well as a place of devotion, commanded the whole city.

He also built a strong and splendid palace, equipped like a fortress, on Mount Zion. Without the city he built fortresses in Galilee and in Perea. As a counterpoise to Jerusalem he rebuilt and fortified Samaria. Within it he erected a temple of great size and beauty. He enlarged and adorned the city to such an extent that it took rank among the most famous cities of the time. He peopled it partly with his soldiers and partly

with the descendants of the old inhabitants. He divided among them the surrounding country, and in honor of the emperor he called it Sebaste, the Greek word for Augusta. He thus prepared a secure place of refuge if by any circumstances he should be driven from Jerusalem.

This was only one of the monuments of his regard for the Roman emperor which he planted in different parts of his dominions, and in which he indulged his ambition for architectural display. In the extreme north of Palestine, at the source of the Jordan, he built a white marble temple which was known by the name of Cæsarea, afterward Cæsarea Philippi.

On the sea-coast there was a small town called the Tower of Strato, a mere village, with a dangerous haven unprotected from the violent southwest winds. This obscure spot Herod turned into a splendid maritime city. His first care was to provide a safe harbor. The breakwater was constructed of immense stones, described by Josephus as fifty feet long, eighteen wide and nine thick, sunk in water one hundred and twenty feet deep. They formed a pier two hundred feet wide, defended by a wall and towers. One of these towers was named Drusus, after the son-in-law of Cæsar. This artificial harbor was large enough, the Jewish chronicler tells us, to accommodate a vast fleet. The pier not only furnished landing-places and buildings for the accom-

modation of the sailors, but a broad, open walk or boulevard encompassing the whole structure. The sea-entrance was upon the north, the side least disturbed by the winds. At this entrance a solid turret resisted the waves upon the left, while on the right stood two vast blocks of stone, each



RUINS OF CÆSAREA PALESTINA.

larger than the turret on the opposite side. Along the shore, buildings were erected of elegant materials, among which was a temple visible to sailors at a great distance. This was the temple of Augustus Cæsar, which gave the name of Cæsarea to the city, otherwise known as Cæsarea Stratonis or Cæsarea Palestina. The temple itself contained

two colossal statues—one of Augustus, equal in proportions to, and resembling in appearance, that of Jupiter Olympus; the other, in honor of the city of Rome, equal to that of Juno at Argos.

Beyond and above these buildings rose the unbroken lines of edifices built of shining marble, which gave a sumptuous appearance to the whole city. An amphitheatre, a theatre and a market-place, the customary ornaments of a Grecian city, were not forgotten by the builder. The drainage of the city was conducted through immense subterranean arches, upon which no less labor was bestowed than upon the structures above ground. This great work occupied Herod from ten to twelve years. When it was completed he made it his residence, and thus elevated it to the rank of civil and military capital of Judea.

This once famous city has long been a heap of ruins. The remains of an old castle at the extremity of the breakwater can still be seen. Two aqueducts, of which Josephus does not speak, still exist in a fair degree of preservation, which furnish an abundant supply of excellent water, and the small vessels of the country often put in here to procure their supply of this article.

Farther down the coast he rebuilt a city called Anthedon which had been demolished in the wars. This he named Agrippeum, after Agrippa, a favorite minister of Augustus, and engraved the name of Agrippa over the city-gate. By methods so

costly and magnificent he flattered the emperor and his court, and made himself the favorite of the master of the world.

Seven miles from the city of Jerusalem, on the spot where he was married to Mariamne, he built a fortified palace. The mound upon which it stood was raised by human hands. An ascent of a hundred steps led to the enclosure, behind and above which was the palace, overlooking the other buildings like a citadel. A town rapidly grew around the base of the hill. Costly aqueducts brought the water-supply from a great distance.

By such undertakings he aimed to perpetuate the name of his family. In honor of his father Antipater he built, in a beautiful plain on the road between Jerusalem and Cæsarea Stratonis, a city which he named Antipatris. Paul afterward passed through this city as a prisoner.* Herod also fortified a citadel near Jericho, a strong and splendid structure, and dedicated it to his mother, giving it the name of Cypros. Another city which he built in the valley north of Jericho he called Phasaelus.

To perpetuate his own name he built a fortress upon an eminence south-east of Jerusalem. Upon this he expended great art and labor, combining strength and splendor in his usual fashion. He lavished money not only upon new structures, but took pleasure in adorning and beautifying places

* Acts xxiii. 31.

which had long been in existence. Damascus, the oldest city in the world; Tripoli, on the Syrian coast, at the foot of Mount Lebanon; Ptolemais, on the coast of Galilee, near the foot of Carmel; Byblus and Berytus (now Beirut), also cities of the coast,—all received marks of his liberality in the form of buildings more or less important. For Laodicea, farther up the coast, he built aqueducts. He supplied Ascalon, in the south, with baths and costly fountains. To other cities he gave large tracts of land; to others still, annual revenues; to others, supplies of provisions; to Rhodes and many other places, money for building ships.

The historian Josephus, to whom we owe the particulars of the great works of Herod, seems to be overwhelmed with the recital of these acts of munificence. "What shall I say," he asks, "of his presents to the Lycians and to the inhabitants of Samos? What of his great liberality through all Ionia? And are not the Athenians and Spartans and the cities of Nicopolis and of Pergamos full of Herod's gifts? And did he not pave the great public square of Antioch in Syria, two miles in extent, with polished marble, and surround it with colonnades, and transform it from its ancient filth to a scene of beauty and delight?"

In addition to all these magnificent works we find him furnishing money to restore the Olympic Games in Greece, and settling revenues upon them,

so that they became a memorial of Herod rather than of the Greeks themselves. Josephus declares that it would be an infinite task to rehearse his payments of people's debts and the remission of tributes of small and burdened cities.

It is a matter of no small perplexity to the reader to imagine whence were derived the enormous sums necessary to the execution of these great projects. But the treasury of Herod seems to have been, like the fabled wealth of Arabian story, equal to every emergency.

B. C. 23. In the midst of these costly enterprises his kingdom was visited by a terrible famine, the result of protracted droughts. The famine was followed by pestilence. The despondency was so great that proper measures for securing another crop were not taken. In this crisis all the better qualities of Herod's nature shone forth. He even turned the gold and silver furnishings of his palace, including some of the finest and most elaborate specimens of art, into money and sent it to Egypt to buy bread. This he sold at reasonable prices to those who were able to buy, and gave as they needed to the poor. To this he added gifts of clothing, since the animals which had supplied them with the necessary materials had perished to a great extent in the famine.

In this liberality he went beyond the bounds of his own kingdom and supplied the neighboring Syrians, who were equally in want. It is com-

puted that to these he gave one hundred and fifty thousand bushels of wheat, and to the needy in his own kingdom six hundred thousand bushels. Nor was he only liberal, but he was sagacious as well. When the harvest was approaching he supplied no fewer than fifty thousand hands for the ingathering of the fruits.

This timely munificence was a powerful and successful appeal to the feelings of the Jewish people. In the supply of their pressing wants they well-nigh forgot the grave offences which Herod had committed against themselves, as well as the monstrous crimes which had stained the hands that now so bountifully fed them. No doubt this was in part the motive of his liberality. While he riveted the regards of Augustus and his court by the great structures which he reared in their honor, he sought to purchase the friendship of his subjects by devoting his wealth to the relief of their calamities. Josephus says that it looked as if these calamities came in order to raise his glory. His liberality had been great beyond all expectation, and the fickle multitude, ready but a little while before to assassinate him, was prepared now to believe that he had been from the beginning the greatest of benefactors.

B. C. 17. But the glory of all these acts, in the estimation of the Jews, was now about to be surpassed. It was the temple itself which he undertook to rebuild in enlarged proportions and greater

magnificence. By this act he hoped to establish an everlasting memorial of himself. It would not only exalt him in the estimation of his subjects, but would entirely do away with the suspicion, which in a multitude of ways had been aroused, that he intended to heathenize the nation and country.

At the outset of this great work it was necessary for him to meet and allay a natural fear of the people. Should he be allowed to take down the old structure, what guarantee had they that he would not leave it a shapeless mass of ruins? Before commencing, therefore, he called the multitude together and made them an address in substance as follows: "I need not tell you, my countrymen, what I have done for you since I came to the kingdom. I have aimed more at your security than at my glory. By God's assistance I feel that I have advanced the nation of the Jews to a degree of happiness which they never had before. As to that undertaking which I have now in mind, it is a work of such piety and excellence as certainly will secure your approval. This temple, built by our fathers when they returned from Babylon, is inferior to that first temple which Solomon built, but not by their fault. And there has been no opportunity since their day to carry out the original plan of this holy edifice; but now, since by the will of God I am your ruler, and since I have enjoyed a long peace and have accumulated

great riches, and, what is more than all, am in the enjoyment of the favor and friendship of Rome, the mistress of the whole world, I consider it my part to make up that long-standing deficiency, and thus to show my gratitude to God for his manifold blessings in giving me this kingdom."

Even after this address Herod saw that his plan excited the fears and incredulity of the people. He was obliged to promise that he would not pull down the old structure until he had provided everything necessary for building the new. This prudent course calmed their fears. A thousand wagons were provided; ten thousand skilled workmen were secured; a thousand sacerdotal garments were prepared for the priests, many of whom were taught the arts of stonecutters and carpenters, that they might take intelligent supervision of the work, as well as construct those parts in which the presence of priests alone could be allowed.

From this time the work went on with steadiness and regularity. The temple-service meanwhile was uninterrupted, and by a kind of fiction the old temple of Zerubbabel was simply regarded as perpetuated and beautified, but not replaced by a new structure. It is reported by Josephus and the Talmud that no rain fell in the daytime during the whole progress of the work. If it rained at night, each morning the wind blew, the clouds dispersed, the sun shone and the work went on. The more sacred portions were finished in eighteen

months. Eight years were required to complete Herod's plans, but additions continued to be made for at least eighty years longer.

Josephus says Herod took away the old foundations before commencing to rebuild, but it is not supposed that he refers to that immense substructure which still remains, and which is believed to have been the work of Solomon's Phœnician builders. On these massive foundations he reared his shining structure of white marble. The stones which Herod provided vied in size with the "great stones" of Solomon, being about thirty-five feet long, sixteen feet broad and eleven or twelve feet thick. The great doors of the temple were splendidly adorned with gold and silver plating. An immense golden vine is especially mentioned, with branches hanging from a great height above one of the gates, the size and fine workmanship of which filled the spectators with surprise. He faced the hill on which the temple stood with walls of such size and height that they were considered the most prodigious work ever heard of by man. The huge stones were fastened together with lead. The space included by the wall was filled with earth and leveled up to the height of the temple-pavement.

Herod's temple is better known than either of the others which preceded it. The whole area which it occupied was distinctly divided into three courts.

The Outer Court was entered from the east through a cloister called the Cloister of Solomon, because it contained fragments from the first temple. Here also were stored the various trophies of the successive wars waged by the Jews against surrounding nations—shields, swords and other arms. Here also Herod fastened the golden eagle of Rome, the symbol of allegiance to that power. On the walls of this outer court were inscriptions in Latin and in Greek, warning all Gentiles from further approach. The pavement of this court was of variegated stone, and the walls were of white marble. Along two sides ran a magnificent colonnade of Corinthian pillars.

The temple-court proper was within the Outer Court, from which it was separated by a lofty castellated wall. It had nine gateways, with towers fifty feet high. One of these, on the east, was the gate Beautiful, mentioned as the scene of a miracle in Acts iii. 2. This was made of Corinthian brass, a metallic compound of great beauty, and more valued in those days than silver or gold. The other gates were over forty feet high, and nearly half as wide; they were covered with plates of precious metals. Every evening they were carefully closed. Twenty men were required to manage the larger gate, to roll back its heavy folding doors and to fasten its bolts and bars into the rock. Within this court a platform was erected for the accommodation of the women. They sat around

in galleries, as they still do in Jewish synagogues. Upon this platform was the treasury, consisting of thirteen receptacles for money, shaped like inverted trumpets. It was into one of these that our Saviour saw the widow cast her two mites.

Ascending a flight of fifteen steps from this Court of the Women, one came to a third wall, enclosing the Court of the Priests. Here the sacrifices were offered upon the great brazen altar, and the people were allowed to witness the solemn ceremonies while separated by a railing from the rest of the space. Still within this enclosure, twelve steps higher than the Court of the Priests, stood the temple itself. Josephus makes it one hundred cubits (or about one hundred and fifty feet) in height, with an entrance-gate nearly one hundred feet high and forty broad. "This gate," he says, "had no doors, for it represented the universal visibility of heaven." But these dimensions are generally considered extravagant, and the precise height of the structure remains unknown. It is believed to have been one hundred and fifty feet in length, and the same in breadth, consisting of a main building and two wings.

The front of the temple was plated all over with gold. The gateway and the adjacent wall were also covered with gold. Over it hung the golden vine already mentioned, with clusters of golden grapes as tall as a man. Across this entrance or gateway, as well as across the doorway of the

innermost sanctuary, hung a Babylonian curtain, wonderfully embroidered with blue and fine linen and scarlet and purple, representing the figures of the constellations, but not the animals of the zodiac. The colors also had a meaning. The scarlet signified fire, the flax the earth, the blue the air, and the purple the sea, which were the four elements as then understood.

Within the temple were the table and candlestick which had been provided by Judas Maccabæus. The innermost chamber was the Holy of Holies, a place about thirty-five feet square. It was separated from the outer part by a veil, and was now empty, but inaccessible and inviolable as in its early days, when it was the veritable habitation of the Deity.

Such was the temple of Herod, the most remarkable of all the numerous architectural works of its author. Even while it was building he was patronizing heathen games and contests, thus following the impulses of his Gentile blood, and at the same time appeasing the discontent and suspicion of his subjects by some great work in the interest of their religion. Indeed, the renovated temple was an object of unbounded admiration, as well it might be.

What a splendid spectacle it must have presented! —the lower court, upheld by huge blocks of masonry and surrounded by its double and quadruple rows of lofty Corinthian columns (each hewn out of a single stone), and stretching around three sides

of the court, each row six hundred feet in length; the inner court, surrounded by embattled towers and gateways, and rising upon a terrace fourteen steps above the first; and, still within these, the temple itself, upon a higher elevation, with its walls and gateways overlaid with gold, ascending to the height of three hundred feet from the ravine below; a triple prospect of wall within wall and terrace upon terrace, combining an almost impregnable fortress with a house of worship whose pattern originally had been revealed from heaven. One of the best authorities of our time has declared that it must have formed, when the beauty of its situation is considered, one of the most splendid architectural combinations to be found in the ancient world.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CLOSING YEARS OF HEROD.

THE extraordinary magnificence of Herod's public life brought no ray of light into the gloom of his household. Josephus says it would have been better for Herod never to have enjoyed the grandeur of a kingdom if he could thus have escaped the calamities of his family. His two high-spirited and handsome sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, children of Mariamne, once their father's pride, became the objects of his darkest suspicion. To counterbalance their influence in the court, he introduced another son, Antipater by name, into the circle, and showed him such favor that the two children of Mariamne lost something of their popularity. Antipater used his position to throw all possible discredit upon his half-brothers. Ambitious to succeed his father on the throne of Judea, he sought to displace his rivals in Herod's affection. The sons of Mariamne were constant reminders of the great crime committed against their mother, and were goads and stings to the conscience of Herod.

Anxious now to advance Antipater's prospects,

Herod sent him to Rome, where he made a great figure as a courtier and as a probable heir to a crown. From Rome he contrived to assail the characters of his brothers, and to accuse them of the design of revenging their mother's death upon Herod himself. Yet Herod, nearly persuaded though he was of the truth of these accusations, controlled his violent passions and fears, abstained from the summary measures which he had taken with their mother, and chose the wise course of carrying the young men with him to Rome, where he laid the accusations before the emperor Augustus himself, and asked him, as an unprejudiced authority and a friend of all parties, to decide the case.

The innocence of Alexander and Aristobulus seemed evident from their hesitation to answer the charges brought against them. Their own defence was impossible without recalling the terrible crimes of their father. Tears mingled with their reluctance to speak. The emperor saw their hesitation, and seemed to understand it. The bystanders sympathized with them, and the accuser, their father, could not conceal his emotion.

At length the elder of the two, Alexander, encouraged by these manifestations, undertook his defence, in which he skillfully avoided the real explanation of the charges, and, speaking in the most conciliatory tone, asked for the slightest proof of any criminal purpose or conspiracy entertained

by him or his brother against Herod. "Supposing that we had killed you," said Alexander, "could we expect to obtain your kingdom? Neither would the earth let us tread upon it, nor the sea let us sail upon it, after such an action as that; nay, the religion of all your subjects and the piety of the whole nation would have prohibited parricides from assuming the government and from entering into that most holy temple built by you." He begged Herod to lay aside his suspicions, but if he would not, then he and his brother were willing to die, rather than be a source of disquiet to him who was their father.

Cæsar, who did not credit the charges before, was now fully satisfied that they were only a base calumny. He looked from the young men to their father. Herod was confused, and prepared to stammer out an apology. The young men, about to fall at their father's feet, were raised up and embraced by Cæsar himself, and the whole company was deeply moved by the scene. The emperor declared the young men entirely innocent, though their actions might not have been sufficiently cautious. He exhorted Herod to lay aside all suspicion and to give no credit to the stories circulated regarding his sons. Thus was brought about a reconciliation, and the party returned to Judea apparently in the utmost harmony.

Soon after Herod publicly announced his intention to make Antipater his successor, thus kindling

anew the discord between the brothers. Alexander and Aristobulus felt it as a slight not only to themselves and to their mother, but to the glories of their family, the house of the Maccabees. Antipater had no claims of lineage whatever. Herod, his father, was an Edomite, and Doris, his mother, was a woman of low descent. To set aside the ancient and royal line of the Maccabees in favor of one so ignoble as Antipater, was naturally regarded as just ground of dissatisfaction. The discord thus renewed was kept alive and augmented by the interminable jealousies of Herod's household. No clearer illustration can be found of the miseries and endless entanglements and complications sure to arise where polygamy is the form of the family life.

Accusations and suspicions of dark crimes flew from brother to brother, from mother-in-law to son-in-law, from father to son, from slave to master, from friend to friend. Scandalous imputations were ascribed to the highest personages. New plots against the king were daily reported of the two sons of Mariamne. Sometimes they had tampered with his confidential servants; sometimes they were said to be laying plans to murder him; sometimes they were about to accuse him to Augustus of treachery to the Roman government. The charges were repeated without ceasing. Gloom, suspicion and distrust were the very atmosphere of the court. Friend shrank from friend; spies

swarmed everywhere. Those who visited the court were suspected of evil designs; those who stayed away were charged with disloyalty. All, however, agreed, whatever might be their own personal hatred and quarrels, in deadly hostility to the sons of Mariamne. Roused to desperation by the multiplied accusations against them, Herod put their confidential slaves to the torture, and the confessions which he extorted from them led him to put the oldest, Alexander, in prison and load him with chains.

The dissensions in Herod's family shook the confidence of the emperor Augustus. He had purposed to make a magnificent addition to Herod's dominions, but these furious and murderous quarrels deterred the cautious emperor. Vain would be the attempt to trace the interminable story of intrigues and briberies, of extortions and calumnies, which formed the daily life of this miserable court. At length, Augustus, after endeavoring to calm the madness of Herod, consented that his sons should be tried before the Roman governors of Syria at Berytus (now Beirut).

Nothing could be proved against them except a purpose to fly from the horrible surroundings of their father's court. But Herod, who was accuser and prosecutor, pushed the proceedings with cruel and passionate energy, himself examining witnesses and reading documents with the most violent emphasis. No defence was allowed on the part of the

accused. The court of one hundred and fifty judges, by a vote of a majority, gave a verdict of condemnation.

An indignant public awaited the result with unwonted interest. Teron, a brave soldier, could not refrain from openly expressing his indignation when the verdict was announced, and loudly exclaimed that "justice was trampled under foot and truth outraged by such a proceeding." He even ventured to protest to the king's face, telling him that he was a miserable man to listen to the wicked wretches who had testified against his sons. He declared that the sympathy both of the people and of the army was with the young men, and warned Herod of the results of their indignation.

The old soldier protested in vain. His rashness, as might be expected, involved him in the same fate with the young men, who, by the orders of Herod, were immediately put to death. Well might the emperor Augustus say that "It were better to be one of Herod's swine than one of his sons."

The sacrifice by their father of these once-favorite sons brought no peace to the fated household. The sacrifice had been made in the interest of Antipater, yet not long after Herod learned, to his horror, that Antipater had conspired with others to poison his old and doting father, in order that he might obtain a little sooner the crown intended for him. Here was real guilt of the deepest dye. The proof was positive and unquestionable.

Antipater was at this time in Rome, securing the friendship and support which he supposed he would need as king in the place of his father. All his plans seemed to be successful. Ignorant of the discovery of his base designs, he hastened home in high hope and spirits. All his rivals had been removed by death; almost nothing now remained between him and the coveted prize. Proud and confident, he landed at the splendid port of Cæsarea. But instead of meeting the acclamations of the thronging multitude, the usually busy streets were a solitude. Every one kept aloof from him or stared at him in ominous silence. Some fearful secret was brooding in the air, of which every one but Antipater seemed cognizant.

The real state of the case was soon revealed to him. Flight now was impossible. Overwhelmed with terror, which he managed to dissemble, he proceeded to Jerusalem. He was immediately put upon his trial. On the tribunal before which he was summoned sat the Roman governor Varus beside his own father Herod. Nothing was lacking of proof. The very poison which he had prepared was produced; a condemned criminal was made to swallow it; he fell dead before the judges. Sentence of death was passed upon Antipater, which, although confirmed by the emperor at Rome, his father, now stricken with a mortal malady, delayed to execute; he, however, changed his will and disinherited the son whom he had once preferred to

the children of Mariamne. Antipater was committed to prison, where he attempted to bribe the keeper. This led to the order for his execution, which was about the last official act performed by the dying Herod.

The hapless monarch was now perishing from an accumulation of terrible disorders. A slow fire seemed to be devouring his vital parts. His appetite was voracious, yet to gratify it threw him into indescribable torments. The dropsy appeared in his limbs; ulcers and worms preyed upon him; spasms convulsed his whole frame. He sought relief from the warm baths of Callirrhoe, but in vain. His end had come; it was time for the earth to be relieved of this monster of cruelty, suspicion and jealousy.

Conscious of the approach of death, it seemed to be his purpose to exceed, by one last act, the whole measure of his life's wanton cruelties. As he lay in mortal agonies at Jericho he issued orders to assemble members from all the chief families in Judea, and to keep them in custody until he died. He secretly enjoined upon his wicked sister Salome to see that at the moment of his death they should all be massacred. In obedience to this summons, a large assembly of the leading men in the kingdom was gathered, who waited, ignorant of the monarch's intention, during the terrible days which still remained of his life. The armed guard surrounding the hippodrome or circus in which they were con-

fined boded no good to the prisoners. It was a dark device by which the monarch, conscious of the hatred of his subjects, attempted to provide for a universal mourning at his death, which otherwise he knew would be welcomed with joy.

On the same day he was seized with a paroxysm of pain so violent that he was on the point of committing suicide. In the midst of the excitement caused by this act, Antipater, supposing his father to be actually dead, endeavored to bribe the jailer to allow him to escape. But the jailer informed the dying king of the fact, when Herod, gaining strength from anger and rising upon his elbows, called for his guards and ordered them to kill Antipater without delay. Five days afterward the hapless father died.

Salome did not dare to carry out Herod's bloody purpose toward the illustrious prisoners in the hippodrome. Without being informed of Herod's death, the doors were opened to them, the guards were dismissed, and all were allowed to depart unmolested, as if by orders of the king himself. It was felt by all the nation to be a wonderful deliverance.

It could not have been many months—some think but a very few days—before his death that Herod commanded the cruel act by which he is best known to readers of the Gospels—the slaughter of the babes of Bethlehem. Jealous, suspicious, and vindictive by nature, surrounded by the plots

and rivalries of the members of his own household, whom he was watching, upbraiding and punishing all the time, the rumor of the birth of a new king of the Jews, announced by wise men from the distant East, who had come to Jerusalem, roused all his passions—his mistrust, his jealous fear, his thirst for blood. It is remarkable that the wise men themselves escaped his indiscriminate cruelty, which might well have been excited by the bare inquiry, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" But Herod was crafty; his plan doubtless was to use the wise men as instruments for securing the person of this king, who would necessarily be the rival of himself. He sent them away, carefully disguising his real feelings. They should come back and inform him where the new king was to be found, and he too would go to do him homage.

But a divine warning led the Magi to avoid the hypocritical and jealous monarch on their return, and Herod's rage expended itself in the command to slaughter indiscriminately the babes of two years old and under of the entire district and village of Bethlehem. But the parents of the infant Jesus had also received timely warning, and they had borne their charge far away before the bloody order was executed. How many tender infants were torn from loving mothers' arms and butchered by the unfeeling soldiers of Herod we cannot tell. Probably not so many as would naturally be under-

stood by the word "slaughter," which is generally applied to the act. The male children of that age in a population of five thousand would be considerably less than one hundred. Some authorities reckon the actual number as fifty, or even less. Hence the outrage, although terrible and bloody for the narrow region in which it was perpetrated, might easily have escaped the notice of the historian Josephus, whose pages were loaded by the darker crimes and more atrocious cruelties of the author of the slaughter.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE NEW KING OF THE JEWS.

WITH Herod the line of famous rulers of Palestine came to a close. Only the shadow of royalty remained to his successors, and soon the poor shadow disappeared under the tramp of Roman legions gathered to crush the last blind movements of Jewish pride and fanaticism. The sceptre was falling from the hands of Judah when another King and Lawgiver, a prince of the house of David, was born in Bethlehem. His various names in Greek, Hebrew and English—Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One—all mean the same thing, and show that he was set apart long before his coming as a ruler—as, in fact, *the* Ruler of Israel.

Herod, surrounded by royal pomp, possessed of enormous riches, was passing away, and those of his children who survived the father's jealousy and cruelty were waiting eagerly to grasp the sceptre as it fell from his lifeless fingers. But a babe born in obscurity and poverty, now a fugitive from the land, was the real heir to the real kingdom of Judah. Herod's kingdom was divided, fell to pieces,

became a petty province of the Roman empire; Christ's kingdom, a kingdom of peace, holiness and charity, conquered the Roman empire and controlled the civilized world.

The Jewish people, indeed, were earnestly expecting some prince and ruler who should deliver them from a foreign dominion, and who should re-establish the ancient worship and glory of the kingdom. But as their views and hopes were almost entirely worldly, they waited for one who should appear as a warrior, as a powerful monarch —one whose great mission should be to exalt the Jewish people above all the nations of mankind. When Christ came, although he was infinitely higher than the personages whom they expected, and although he wrought far more wonderful works than king or warrior could have done, they saw no beauty or fitness in him for their purposes. He did not rally them around the standard of war; he preached no revolt or violence; he held out no tempting prospect of Jewish aggrandizement. He preached repentance, he proclaimed the kingdom of heaven.

Instead of falling in with the proud leaders of the people, he rebuked their falsehood, their formalism and their hypocrisy, and preached and wrought miracles among the masses, the poor and the suffering. His work was for the spiritual wants of men. He taught them truth and righteousness; he held before them his own perfect example. He showed

them that the law of God demanded the service of the heart, and not only the outward act. He roused the consciences of men; he revealed to them with divine clearness and certainty a coming judgment and an eternal state of reward and punishment after death.

He performed unparalleled miracles. He cured the hopelessly sick by a word, a touch, an "I will, be thou clean." He gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, strength to the lame; he stilled the storm by a command; he walked upon the water; he fed five thousand with a handful of provisions; he cast out devils; he restored the dead to life. All these works he repeated, some of them time and again, in open day, in the presence of enemies and unbelievers, in the midst of crowds of witnesses. He proved himself able, if he chose, to be all that the most extravagant Jewish expectations could demand; he showed himself, in a word, to be divine, the Son of man and the Son of God.

He taught with such simplicity, beauty and power that his enemies were compelled to say, "Never man spake like this man." As his miracles are the most wonderful facts on record, so his sayings are the most wonderful words ever uttered. The mingled charm and instruction of his parables, the tenderness of his persuasions and consolations, the richness of his promises and the profound emphasis of his warnings and threatenings, make the Gospels the greatest of all books.

While a chosen few, humble and peaceable people, received his instruction, accepted him as the Messiah and believed in his divine nature; and while multitudes came to know of him, and were half persuaded to become his followers, the leaders of the Jews—priests, scribes and Pharisees—with few exceptions (as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea), rejected him, persecuted him and sought to put him to death. Meanwhile, the Master pursued his course unchanged. Adding miracle to miracle, discourse to discourse, he chose his twelve apostles out of the lowest and most despised of the earth, and thus from fishermen of Galilee he constructed the foundations of the kingdom of heaven, which he came to establish on earth.

At length, betrayed by Judas, he fell into the hands of his enemies, who dragged him before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. "Art thou a king, then?" asked the governor of this strange captive, who stood before him without arms, without followers, and yet so noble, so calm, so great in demeanor, that he must be something more than a mere man. "Yes, I am," was the reply, "but my kingdom is not of this world." It was one of the marvels of his kingdom that its great power and success should grow out of its seeming feebleness and overthrow. The kingdom which the Jewish people were waiting and longing for, and which demanded a warlike leader, would have been weak, slight and transient compared with that about to

arise through the power of this lonely, defenceless prisoner.

Pilate wished to release a prisoner against whom no crime could be alleged. What harm if one so powerless should claim to be a king? But the Jews cried out, "We have no king but Cæsar" —a hypocritical cry; for if Jesus had offered to lead them in revolt against Cæsar, they would have followed him with acclamations. It was because he would not set himself up as king in the sense of a temporal ruler that they refused to listen to him and rejected his claims. "We have no king but Cæsar" was a surrender of all national spirit, of all hope of independence and of all expectation of the conquering Messiah. They did not, could not, mean it. "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend." This appeal to Pilate's feelings as a Roman was a shameful device to secure the doom of Jesus. It was an appeal against one of their own countrymen to the prejudices and cruelty of their tyrants and oppressors.

Pilate, according to custom, expecting to release some prisoner at the Feast of the Passover, proposed that it should be Jesus, but the multitude, urged on by the priests, became frantic in their demands for his death. They preferred Barabbas, a murderer and a robber. As for Jesus, they cried out, "Away with him! crucify him!"

And so their voices finally prevailed, and Jesus was given up to be crucified. He was scourged,

spit upon, buffeted, crowned with thorns, given over to the insults of a ruffian soldiery. He was loaded with his own cross, and led away to a death of torture, a common criminal's doom. Hung by pierced hands and feet between two thieves, mocked by soldiers and common people, he dies, and in that death becomes the great Sacrifice for sins. He fulfills all the bleeding types of the old dispensation. By that act of rejection he is made perfect as the Captain of our salvation. He does a work for all people; he makes an end of sin; he makes reconciliation for iniquity and brings in everlasting righteousness.

But on the third day he rose again. This carried his triumph beyond the highest conceptions of men. His followers had been sunk in the deepest despair by his death. Bewildered and confounded, they were ready to scatter in every direction. They were astonished on the first day of the week to find the tomb empty but they were utterly unprepared to believe in his resurrection. They listened incredulously to those who first reported the news of the Master's reappearance. Overwhelmed at last with the evidence, even the most skeptical were convinced, and were fain to cry out, "My Lord and my God!"

Thus the Jews, in killing their own Messiah, made him the Redeemer of the world. Blinded to his true mission, which was one of blessing to them and all mankind, they gave him to all mankind as

the vicarious Sacrifice for all, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. It was the mysterious ordering of Providence brought to pass freely by the agency of men. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and, by wicked hands, have crucified and slain." "O fools and slow of heart!" said Christ to his hesitating disciples, perplexed by the circumstances of his death—slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken—"ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?"

Nothing now could hide the divine power of his mission or hinder the establishment of his Church upon the everlasting rock of truth. At one bound it appeared as the heir of universal empire in the thoughts and hearts of men. The souls of Christ's followers were at once lifted above all fear of man and above all concern for the worldly prosperity and outward triumph of the Messiah's kingdom. They had learned the true purpose of the Master's coming, and their souls were filled and transformed by its power. They were altogether different men. They could face kings, mobs and tortures without flinching. They could travel over the known world, proclaiming the gospel.

Meanwhile, their unbelieving countrymen persevered in their violent attempts to maintain a temporal kingdom. They stirred up the most bloody revolts. They contended, in one of the most furi-

ous and horrible wars known in history, against the Roman power. They utterly failed. Their temple was destroyed to the foundations. The Holy City fell into the hands of their enemies. Their land has since been a habitation of strangers, and they have been scattered over the face of the earth.

On the other hand, the kingdom of the rejected Messiah has become the greatest of all kingdoms. "The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner." There are now in the world probably one hundred times as many nominal Christians as there were Jews in the time of Christ, and they are the foremost in the rank of nations. This is "the kingdom of God within you," which came "without observation," and which the proud and worldly-minded of the people treated with contempt. They could see nothing promising in its beginnings. They mistook the meaning of the prophecies and the purposes of God. They knew not the day of their visitation. When the great world-wide triumph came, neither were they there to see it nor did their nation as a nation enjoy the slightest share of it.

It was the divine purpose to make known through the Jews the plan of redemption to all the world. From the call of Abraham this was their appointed mission among the nations of the earth. If they had heartily joined in this purpose as a nation, they would undoubtedly never have forfeited the divine favor and perished so miserably. They would

never have come into such bloody, useless and destructive collision with the Roman power. Such a wonderful Christian worker, writer and organizer as Paul, such a deep theologian as John, were but specimens of what multitudes of that people in successive generations might have become as instruments for spreading the truth. But the mass of them, infatuated and blinded by their own pride and worldly ambition, turned their backs on their high opportunity, fought against their God, thrust his word from them and judged themselves unworthy of eternal life.

As the people thus went rapidly down to their doom, those who accepted and followed Christ, although few, became the real nation, the true Israel. When worldly splendor and royalty utterly disappeared from the former seat of the kings, then Christ perpetuated the royal line of David and gave it a magnificence in earth and heaven, not dreamed of in the prophet's vision. When the pomp of the ancient ritual, the costly, spotless, bleeding victims, the sprinkled blood and the high-priestly intercession in the Holy of Holies all passed away, the Messiah had already taken its place, at once the priest and the victim, the intercessor and the propitiation, the all-perfect, infinite Sacrifice, in whom the whole meaning of the ritual was fulfilled.

When the gorgeous temple fell under the torch of the conqueror, and the whole pile of cedar and

marble and gold and hangings and costly vestments became a heap of charred and blood-soaked ruins, then, liberated from all narrow locality, the Christian Church founded its temples in every gathering-place of men, in every hamlet, village and city. The old dispensation had come to an end. It expired by limitation, by the termination of its uses. But the Jewish rulers, like blind Samsons, pulled it down upon their heads, overwhelming their people in a horrible overthrow. What was meant for a fulfillment and transformation became a convulsion, a catastrophe, a great day of the coming of the Lord.

It will be the melancholy task of what remains of this history to describe this catastrophe, so far as it is describable. More sorrowful scenes than those which marked the downfall of the Holy City and the suppression of the Jewish people never transpired in the history of man; and never were any horrors more truly self-inflicted than these. Through every page the line seems to glow: "His blood be upon us and upon our children!" Everywhere reappears the same insensate fury; the same needless provoking of foes clearly too powerful to resist; the same foolhardy obstinacy, too near a sublime courage to be despised, too hopeless and too costly to be applauded, wounding the enemy only to exasperate and to give momentum to the blow when it should fall; the same fierceness and mutual jealousies which cut patriotism up by the

root, and which made party hatred more intense and vindictive than hatred against the common foe.



TITUS.

Though the spiritual life had fled from the worship of the Holy City, and the service of the temple had sunk to a meaningless form—notwithstanding the rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah had cast an ineffaceable stain upon the nation—what human heart does not to this day bleed over the story of the woes of the final destruction of Jerusalem? Who can read without shuddering and tears the crowded chronicle of the historian of the Jewish war? Who does not respond to the outburst of divine pathos uttered from the slope of Mount Olivet in full view of the doomed city?—"O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SUCCESSORS OF HEROD.

WITH great pomp and ceremony the dead monarch was carried to his grave. The body was laid upon a golden bier ornamented with precious stones and wrapped in purple robes. A sceptre was in the king's right hand and the cold brow was adorned with royal diadem and crown. His sons and numerous relations walked close around the bier; behind followed his body-guard, and then his picked foreign bands, Thracians, Germans, Galatians, all fully equipped; then came the whole army which had been under his command, in battle array. After these five hundred of his household servants followed, carrying the usual spices for embalming. Dying at Jericho, he was buried by his own request at Herodium, twenty-five miles distant in a south-westerly direction. The vast procession, it is believed, marched all that distance; and a great pageant it must have made as it slowly wound over the ridges and around the valleys of the hill-country of Judea.

The two sons of Mariamne and their rival Antipater being dead, and no one of his remaining sons

having so deep a hold upon their father's affections as these, Herod divided his kingdom into three parts, and left a portion by will to each of his three remaining sons—Archelaus, Herod Antipas and Philip. Judea, with Samaria and Edom, fell to Archelaus; Herod Antipas had Galilee and Perea; while Philip held the northern regions of Gaulonitis, Trachonitis and Paneas.

Archelaus now "reigned, in the room of his father Herod," over two parts of the three into which Palestine was divided—the third part, Galilee, belonging to the descendant of Herod who bore his father's famous name. His seven days' mourning for his father over, Archelaus gave a magnificent banquet to the people, and then entered the temple in great pomp and amid general acclamations. He made an address which was received with vehement applause, yet many unwelcome demands reached the ear of the new king amid the tumult. Some called for a diminution of the heavy burdens imposed by his father; others for the opening of the prisons, still crowded with the victims of Herod's cruelty. The polite but vague replies of Archelaus were insufficient to quell the outcries, which did not cease when the ceremony was over. Officer after officer was sent with conciliatory messages to the leaders. Arguments and threats were alike unavailing, and the popular movement began to assume a formidable proportion.

The Passover was now approaching, which was always the signal for a great assembling of Jews in the capital city and for a vast increase of excitable and dangerous material. Archelaus, unwilling to make the concessions demanded, saw that he must act with vigor if he intended to uphold his authority and escape a terrible insurrection. The insurgents were accordingly assailed by a large body of troops, and three thousand of them were surrounded and slain. The strangers, who had already assembled in large numbers to celebrate the Passover, were driven from their encampment outside the city-walls and compelled by proclamation to return to their homes. The Passover was interrupted, and the blood of the miserable people was mingled with their sacrifices. To the general horror, the great national festival was not allowed to be concluded, and Archelaus entered upon his reign amid dark and inauspicious omens. No wonder that Joseph and Mary, returning from Egypt with the infant Jesus, felt it unsafe to remain in his dominions, and betook themselves with their charge to the quieter district of Galilee. There, in the secluded and charming village of Nazareth, the Saviour spent the greater part of his earthly existence.

In order to ensure his right to the throne of Judea, it was needful for Archelaus to obtain the assent of the Roman emperor, Augustus, to his father's will. Accordingly, he sailed to Rome,

where he presented his cause to the emperor in person. Here he found formidable foes in his own brothers and relatives. Herod Antipas, ruler of Galilee and Perea, claimed the throne of Judea by the former will of Herod, and brought many charges against Archelaus, including the recent slaughter of three thousand at the Passover. Augustus took the matter into consideration, and kept the rival candidates for some time waiting at Rome.

Meanwhile, the province for which these rivals were contending was torn with distractions. Sabinus, the military governor of Syria, not regarding the will of the deceased monarch as binding, marched his army from Antioch to Jerusalem, and put the city into new turmoil by demanding an immediate surrender of the fortresses and of the treasures left by Herod and held by the temple. A fierce conflict ensued within the temple precincts. The Jews held the Roman soldiers at bay until the latter set fire to the immense wooden buildings surrounding the enclosure. The temple was then carried by assault; every one of the defenders perished by the sword or by flame, and the sacred treasures were seized and appropriated by the Roman general and the soldiery.

But now Sabinus, victorious in the city, found himself surrounded and besieged by forces from without. The whole country was overrun with robber bands, made up in part of Herod's dis-

banded troops and in part of false prophets and fanatics, who easily drew multitudes of excited and credulous people after them. Varus, another Roman officer, hastened to the relief of Sabinus, raised the siege of Jerusalem, and, having spread his troops over the country, seized the ringleaders in the tumults and put two thousand persons to death by crucifixion.

All these disorders arose from the impatience of the Jews under a foreign yoke. They longed to get rid of the Herodian family and to return to the noble traditions of their Maccabean rulers. And while the emperor Augustus delayed his decision in regard to Herod's will, they flocked around him with petitions to restore their ancient constitution and totally suppress kingly government in their country. A deputation of five hundred Jews appeared in Rome to urge this request; eight thousand Jews, resident in Rome, joined the deputation.

An audience was granted them by Augustus, and the petitioners enlarged upon the oppressions, cruelties, shameful indignities, summary executions and enormous taxations of the late king. Their history recorded no calamities that could be compared to those inflicted upon them by the reign of Herod. And as for Archelaus, his acts had already shown that he was determined not to prove inferior to his father in wrong and injustice. Could they but be made part of the province of Syria they would still be subject to Rome, but would enjoy a degree

of freedom in managing their own local and religious affairs.

Augustus heard their plea as well as the plea of Archelaus to the contrary; in a few days he issued his decree, confirming substantially the will of Herod, and leaving Archelaus master of Judea, with the title of ethnarch instead of king.

But just as he was about taking possession, an impostor made his appearance, pretending to be Alexander, one of the murdered sons of Mariamne. He claimed that he had been stolen away by those sent to slay him, who slew another man in his place. In person he greatly resembled the true Alexander, and he had been so well taught to play his part that very many were deceived and contributed money to enable him to visit Rome and there boldly plead his cause with the emperor himself. Augustus, suspicious from the first, had the shrewdness to notice that the pretender's hands were not like a prince's, soft and smooth, but hard and horny from day-labor. The emperor took him aside and urged him to confess the fraud, promising him his life if he revealed the contriver of the delusion.

Moved by fear and awed by the majesty of the emperor, the youth acknowledged everything. The emperor kept his word with the pretender, but sent him to the galleys for life and put his instructor to death. So, every obstacle being removed, Archelaus entered upon his reign about two years after the birth of Christ.

The reign itself was of almost no account in the judgment of the historian. Only the circumstances of its beginning and end deserve our attention. We know that he was cruel and unjust, but in what particulars there are no records to show. Grave charges were made against him, and finally he was summoned to Rome, where, after a solemn hearing before the emperor, he was deprived of his office and banished to Gaul. His estates were confiscated and Judea was reduced to a Roman province.

Thus the sceptre finally departed from Judah, while the true Messiah and King was a child of but a few years. About the time when he commenced going up with his parents from Nazareth to the feast at Jerusalem, perhaps at the time when he tarried behind and argued with the lawyers in the temple, the last shadow of the temporal kingdom was passing away from Judea in the person of the banished Archelaus; Quirinus or Cyrenius, a Roman of high rank, was made governor—probably the same person who is mentioned in Luke ii. 2 as some years before concerned in the census. This census, called by Luke "the first," was not a taxation,* but an enrollment or enumeration of the inhabitants, supposed by some critics to have been left incomplete. Now, when Archelaus had been deposed and the country made a mere dependency upon the emperor, one of the first measures of the

* See marginal reading to Luke ii. 2.

new governor was to impose a tax, or tribute-money, thus completing the process begun by the same person some ten years before.

In this manner the utter subjection of the people to the Roman power was made painfully manifest. Their kings, indeed, had been vassals of Rome, yet they were their own kings, and under them the management of their internal affairs was left to themselves. Now every individual was made to feel himself a direct subject of the heathen emperor—a great and humiliating revolution in their history. No wonder that we hear of rebellious movements, such as Gamaliel rehearses in his speech recorded by Luke in Acts v. 37: "After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him."

This Judas was the chief teacher of the doctrine of independence under which the Jews made their last desperate struggles against the Roman yoke. He charged his countrymen with cowardice in submitting to pay the tax imposed by their heathen oppressors. He insisted that under God they owed allegiance to no power or government. He gathered a distinct class or sect, made up of every kind of material—true patriots zealous for country and law, as well as the fierce, the licentious and the unprincipled. The watchword of the party was, "We have no lord and master but God."

But the national spirit, which two centuries

before responded so grandly to the rallying-cry of the Maccabees, now failed to appear. The Roman power was too vast, the weight of its legions too crushing. The times, too, had changed, and a kingdom not of this world was arising amid the falling structure of Judaism. Judas was defeated and slain, his followers were dispersed, and their only permanent work was to strengthen the passion and fury which slumbered uneasily in the breasts of the people and finally broke out in the desperate and horrible war with the Roman power.

All subsequent insurrections and the final ruin of the city and the temple are ascribed to his influence by Josephus. The fierce party of Zealots, and the Assassins—who, like the Nihilists of our day in Russia, used murder as their chief weapon—were the offspring of the movement of Judas.

For the time being, however, the country was at peace. It is remarkable that during the life of Christ, at least after these disturbances of his earlier years, no serious trouble between the people and their foreign rulers broke out. The quiet which was necessary for his various journeys, his works of healing and beneficence, his discourses and teachings, his selection and training of the apostles and laying carefully the foundations of his Church, prevailed. The narrative of the evangelists presents a tranquil scene, a succession of attractive pictures, in striking contrast to the

bloody and tumultuous events which crowd each other in the pages of Josephus. It is as if the nation was enjoying a short reprieve, a last golden moment of opportunity, when it might recognize its Messiah and by repentance and humility escape its threatened doom.

We seem once more to see the Redeemer in tears and to hear his moving lamentation: "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes."

It is clear that under opposite circumstances no teacher of piety and peace could have accomplished his mission in Judea. In a previous generation, under the jealous and bloody Herod, the career of Jesus would have been immediately cut short. Under a succeeding generation, when the whole land trembled with forebodings of the great civil war, there could have been no peaceful gatherings on the mountain-side to listen to the Beatitudes, to the model prayer and to the sweet parables of the kingdom; no wonderful draughts of fishes, and no discourses to the multitudes from the fishermen's boats drawn up on the shore of the Sea of Galilee; no quiet feeding of five thousand with a few loaves and fishes when every large gathering meant rebellion and war; no time to let the words and deeds of the great Teacher sink deliberately and diffuse widely through the hearts and minds of the people, like a gentle rain, or for that solemn march of

events which gradually led to his death, and gave it the dignity of a great epoch, the grandeur of a divine sacrifice for a fallen race.

But while our Saviour pursued his mission unmolested by the authorities of Judea, his forerunner, John the Baptist, met a different fate under Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, the sixth son of Herod the Great. This Antipas had put away wrongfully his own wife, and had enticed away Herodias, his niece and sister-in-law, from her husband, Herod Philip, and made her his wife. This doubly, trebly shameful performance called forth the remonstrance of John the Baptist, who appears to have commanded the respect even of the dissolute ruler. "Herod feared John," it is said, and listened attentively to his preaching, altering his conduct and showing some tenderness of conscience under his appeals. But when the stern and intrepid reformer attacked his unlawful marriage, the guilty woman Herodias in her anger insisted upon the death of John, and after securing his imprisonment finally accomplished her revenge; she had John the Baptist's head brought to her in a charger.

How disturbed and uneasy was the conscience of Antipas after this dreadful deed appears from the fact that when he heard of the wonderful works of Christ he said, "This is John the Baptist whom I have beheaded; he is risen from the dead." It is noticeable that this Herodian family had little

enjoyment of their luxury and their splendid sins; they all had conscience enough remaining to sting them for their crimes, if not to restrain them from committing them.

For a period of twenty-three years Judea had but two Roman governors, the second of whom was Pontius Pilate, under whom Jesus was put to death. He retained his office until the year 37 A. D., when he was called to account for his severity toward the Samaritans and summoned to Rome. Here it is believed that he ended with his own hand a life which had become miserable in banishment. Other stories connect the scene of his death with the so-called Mount Pilatus by Lake Lucerne in Switzerland. Here he is said to have passed many years, a victim to remorse and despair for his share in the unspeakable crime of the crucifixion; finally, he is reported to have plunged into the dismal lake upon the summit of the mountain, and so to have ended his life. A strange superstition prevailed not long ago in connection with this lake on Mount Pilatus. It is to the effect that "a form often rises from the gloomy waters, and goes through the action of washing the hands; as it does so, dark clouds are seen gathering upon the bosom of the lake, and then, wrapping the whole upper part of the mountain in darkness, presage a tempest or hurricane, which is sure to follow in a short space." A third place is pointed out at Vienne, a famous town on the Rhone, in France,

where a singular monument, of a pyramidal form, fifty-two feet high, is shown as "Pontius Pilate's tomb."

There remained one more member of the family of Herod who, after the most varied and opposite experiences, obtained the supremacy in a part of Palestine; this was Herod Agrippa, the grandson of Herod and Mariamne, and son of Aristobulus, who with his brother Alexander had been put to death upon the charge of attempting to poison the king. At one time a great favorite of the emperor Tiberius, he was afterward thrown by him into prison, and lay there until the emperor died. Caligula, the successor of Tiberius, not only liberated Agrippa, but made him successor of Philip, tetrarch of Galilee, with the title of king, and presented him with a chain of gold of the same weight with the iron one which he had borne in prison.

Caligula was one of those Roman emperors who demanded to be worshiped by the people of all his dominions as a god. He ordered his statue to be set up in all places of worship, among others in the temple at Jerusalem. Petronius, governor of Syria, reluctantly made arrangements to carry out this arbitrary decree. Orders were issued to Sidonian workmen to cast the statue. Troops were collected, and the governor went into winter quarters at Ptolemais, on the Mediterranean coast of Galilee. But no sooner had the intelligence spread

among the people than many thousands of all ages, ranks and sexes assembled from all quarters at Ptolemais to entreat the governor to desist from his purpose. They covered the country to a vast distance like a cloud. They were unarmed and defenceless; many of them were clad in sackcloth and had ashes on their heads. All declared their steadfast purpose to die rather than submit to the desecration of their temple. In response to the admonitions and rebukes of Petronius they declared that they dreaded the wrath of their God more than that of the emperor.

The same scene presented itself at Tiberias, on the Lake of Galilee, whither Petronius and his chief officers went to obtain more certain information of the state of the country. The people crowded by thousands into his presence and urged the abandonment of the hateful and blasphemous measure. Petronius urged the power of the Romans, the positive command of the emperor and the uniform obedience of other nations. "Are you resolved," he asked, "to wage war against your emperor?"—"We have no thought of war," they replied, "but we will submit to be massacred rather than violate our Law;" and at once the whole body fell with their faces to the earth and offered their throats to the swords of the soldiers.

Forty days passed by amid such scenes; the crops lay neglected, famine was impending. The most distinguished men of the nation added their

remonstrances. They entreated Petronius to send their presentations to Caligula. Petronius hesitated, and then humanely resolved to risk the wrath of the emperor rather than deluge the nation with blood. He declared his determination to suspend the execution of the decree till he should receive word from Rome, and promised to do all in his power to secure the total repeal of the edict. He urged the people to disperse immediately and to give immediate attention to their suffering crops.

The season had been uncommonly sultry; the needful rains had not fallen. When Petronius commenced his speech the sky was serene. Scarcely had he ended when the clouds gathered and the needed rain began to fall. The people saw in this a happy omen, and even Petronius was struck by the fact.

When Caligula received the despatches of Petronius he flew into a violent passion. Agrippa, who was then in Rome, endeavored to soothe his anger. He entertained Caligula at a banquet so sumptuous even in that age of extravagance and luxury that the astonished emperor offered to grant him any request he might make. Agrippa, instead of demanding greater wealth or territory, immediately begged for the repeal of the fatal edict. The emperor struggled with his pride for a time, but finally granted the request and recalled the decree.

After a reign of four years Caligula was assassinated in his own palace. Agrippa, who had re-

mained in Rome, exercised a powerful and salutary influence at that critical moment. Civil war was ready to break out between the Senate and soldiers, but was prevented by the mediation of Agrippa. This secured him the friendship of the new emperor, Claudius. Already ruler of Galilee and other northern provinces, he now received in addition the provinces of Samaria and Judea. The edict which announced this gift contained also a high eulogium on Agrippa, and the act was registered on a brazen tablet which was deposited in the Capitol; a formal treaty was also concluded between the emperor and Agrippa in the Forum. This occurred in the year 41, not long after the supposed date of the conversion of Paul.

Agrippa now returned to his kingdom in great splendor. Like Herod his grandfather, he indulged his foreign and heathen tastes while seeking popularity with the Jews. He showed the utmost respect for their religion; he hung up in the temple the golden chain which he had received from Caligula in place of the iron one which he had worn as a prisoner. He wished it to remain as a memorial of the remarkable changes he had experienced and of the providential guidance which he had enjoyed. He observed the ceremonial law with strictness, and offered sacrifices every day. He remitted an onerous tax upon dwellings in Jerusalem.

But he also built a great theatre at Berytus (now Beirut), where the most costly musical exhibitions

were held; an amphitheatre too, where the heathenish gladiatorial shows were enacted, and where on one occasion as many as seven hundred men on each side engaged in the dire conflict of blood. This is the Herod Agrippa, called simply "Herod," who is spoken of in Acts, twelfth chapter, as stretching "forth his hands to vex certain of the Church." He put to death James, the brother of John, with the sword; and when he saw that it was a popular act he seized Peter and put him in prison, doubtless intending to treat him in like manner. But Peter escaped by a miracle, an angel having opened the prison-doors and led him forth in safety. When, in the morning, investigation was made and Peter could not be found, Agrippa ordered the soldiers on guard to be put to death.

After this the reign of Agrippa was short. Three years after his elevation by Claudius he ordered a splendid festival at Cæsarea in honor of the emperor. It was a great public event, and was attended by multitudes of high rank. Agrippa appeared in magnificent attire made of silver, which glittered in the morning sun. The people were dazzled at the sight, and when he spoke they cried out, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man!" Proudly receiving their homage and giving not God the glory, the angel of the Lord smote him, and he was attacked with the same terrible disorder which destroyed his grandfather, Herod the Great: he was eaten of worms. Writhing in vio-

lent internal pain, he was carried to the palace. There he lingered five days in great agony, and died when but forty-four years of age. He had reigned over Galilee seven years, and three over the whole of Palestine.

He left four children—one son, Agrippa, and three daughters, Drusilla, Bernice and Mariamne; the names of the son and the first two named daughters appear in the Acts of the Apostles.

There was rejoicing at his death, particularly on the part of his soldiers in Sebaste and Cæsarea. They made a great feast, and in other ways expressed their contempt for his memory. Claudius the emperor was indignant at this dishonor put upon his friend, and ordered the soldiers away in disgrace. The order was not executed, but a feeling of humiliation rankled in the minds of the soldiers, and prepared them to take a leading part in the tragic scenes which followed.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PRESAGES OF THE FINAL STRUGGLE.

AGRIPPA'S son, who also was known as Herod Agrippa, being but a youth when his father died, did not inherit his honors or possessions. About seven years after that event (A. D. 51) he was made ruler over the temple and some outlying province, with the title of king. But Judea was a Roman province under governors appointed by the emperor. Roman soldiers were everywhere. The Tower of Antonia, overlooking the temple-area, was occupied by Cæsar's cohorts. During the national festivals, to preserve order, a guard of Roman soldiers was placed in the precincts of the temple itself.

The presence of these heathen troops at the most sacred of the national celebrations kept the indignant feelings of the people at a high pitch of intensity. On one occasion a soldier on guard, to show his contempt for the services, indecently exposed his person. The enraged people demanded his punishment of the Roman commander, but instead of that he ordered all his forces upon the scene. The Jews were driven from the temple,

and between their own blind movements and the pressure of the soldiers upon the dense crowd it is said that ten thousand were crushed and trampled to death in the narrow streets.

Cumanus, the Roman governor of Judea, may not have been responsible for this lamentable slaughter. One of his soldiers soon after, while engaged in pillage, found a copy of the law of Moses and tore it to pieces, uttering the most offensive blasphemies. When the governor's attention was called to the act he ordered the soldier to be put to death. But everything that happened served to heighten the animosity between the people and the soldiers.

And now the old feud between the Jews and Samaritans broke out anew. Jews passing from Galilee to the temple would naturally pass through Samaria. The Samaritans waylaid and slew the pilgrims, and then bribed the Roman governor, so that he refused to call them to account. The Jews themselves undertook to chastise them, but Cumanus interfered and protected the Samaritans. Once more the populace was aroused and ready for immediate insurrection. The priests and rulers, well aware of the results of such a movement, besought the people to desist from their mad endeavors. In sackcloth and ashes they passed through the streets, portraying the desolation and ruin they would bring upon the city and temple if they persisted.

Thus the city was quieted, but confusion prevailed everywhere else. The question between

the pilgrims and the Samaritans remained open until Quadratus, governor of Syria, investigated the affair and made a show of impartiality by condemning the Samaritans. Cumanus and his lieutenant, Celer, were sent to Rome, where the case was more justly decided. Cumanus was banished, and Celer and the ringleaders of the Samaritans were put to death.

Cumanus was succeeded in the governorship of Judea by Felix, a freed slave, and yet a favorite of the emperor Nero, and a powerful and influential person at that time. For one of his wives Felix had Drusilla, daughter of the late king, Herod Agrippa. He had enticed her from her lawful husband, Aziz, king of Emesa. Of Felix Tacitus says he exercised the office of a king with the spirit of a slave. This was the unworthy and guilty ruler before whom Paul stood to plead his cause against his Jewish accusers, and who, not being utterly hardened as yet, trembled like a criminal as his prisoner mightily reasoned of righteousness, temperance (chastity) and judgment to come.* It is quite in accordance with his character for corruption that he kept Paul a prisoner in the hope of receiving a bribe to release him.

The land was overrun with armed robbers. Felix at first proceeded vigorously against them, but afterward showed his true character by entering into an alliance with some of the most daring

* Acts xxiv. 25.

of their leaders. In response to the remonstrances of the high priest he hired assassins to attack him while engaged in conducting the worship of the temple. Pretending to join in the worship, the miscreants drew near the unsuspecting priest, and drawing their concealed daggers struck him dead. The crime was unavenged. We now begin to read of the Assassins who formed a secret and organized company resembling the Nihilists of Russia in our day, and who carried on their dreadful work almost without scruple or hesitation. Private enemies or persons of wealth were stricken down without warning by persons who seemed to be casually passing by. The very temple was not safe. The worshiper in those sacred precincts had to be on his guard against the man kneeling by his side. No one was secure from these secret and practiced murderers. They were called *Sicarii*, or Assassins, and were the fanatical and desperate element among the followers of Judas the Galilean.

The robbers in the rural districts grew more bold. Impostors multiplied in number, and led vast crowds of the people to follow them. "That Egyptian" mentioned by Claudius Lysias, the captain of the Roman garrison, in his interview with Paul on the stairs of Antonia ("Art thou not that Egyptian?" etc.), * was one of these impostors. He was followed by four thousand Sicarii, and by many thousands of others—thirty thousand in all, accord-

* Acts xxi. 38.

ing to Josephus. From his place of rendezvous near Jericho he led the multitude to the Mount of Olives, and, pointing to the city below, promised them that the walls would fall at their approach and admit them in triumph.

Felix attacked and dispersed this rabble. "The Egyptian" escaped, but many of his deluded followers perished. In the midst of cruelties, exactions and licentious excesses Felix's term of office wore away. He made no effort to remove or to abate the grievances under which the Jews were suffering, but rather aggravated them for his own private gain. It was, in fact, during his governorship that the twenty years' struggle which ended in the overthrow of Jerusalem may be said fairly to have begun.

It was in Cæsarea, on the coast north-west of Jerusalem—the famous city which Herod raised to such a pitch of prosperity and splendor—that these earlier disorders broke out. The heathen and the Jewish elements in the large population were always jealous, hostile and contentious for the pre-eminence. The Jews based their claims on the founding of the new city upon the old Jewish village, "the Tower of Strato," by their own king, Herod; the heathens, or Syrian Greeks, pointed to the statues and temples which abounded in the city, and which were entirely inconsistent with Jewish notions of propriety. Tumults broke out in the streets. The Roman soldiers, instead of preserving

the peace, took sides with the heathen element. When the Jews showed their contempt for the authority of Felix, he ordered the troops to charge upon them, with the inevitable consequence of bloodshed, robbery and violence. When complaint was made of this act to Nero, and heavy charges were brought against the whole administration of the corrupt governor, the response of the emperor to the charges was a decree depriving the Jews of Cæsarea of all rights of citizenship; while Felix, who had just been recalled, was allowed to go unpunished. Thus the contest became more vehement; the Greeks became more insulting, the Jews more restive and turbulent.

Two years before Felix was removed the apostle Paul fell into his hands as a prisoner. Arrested on a false charge by the Jews in the temple, and rescued from a mob by the Roman captain Claudius Lysias, he was in danger of assassination by a secret conspiracy of forty Jews, who had bound themselves neither to eat nor drink until they had slain Paul. They were probably a portion of the murderous band of Sicarii, to whom assassination had become an every-day business or a pastime. The captain of the temple, on being informed of this conspiracy, promptly sent Paul under a strong guard of Roman soldiers to Cæsarea, to the presence of Felix himself.

Felix soon appointed a day for hearing Paul's case, but after the arguments of Tertullian, the ad-

vocate of the Jews, and the noble defence of Paul, Felix declined to decide the question. He kept Paul in custody, but ordered a very large liberty to be given to the prisoner. He professed a deep interest in the teachings of the apostle, and came afterward, with his unlawful wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess, to hear more fully the chief topic of Paul's preaching—faith in Christ. Paul did not hesitate to rebuke Felix for the specific sins of which he was guilty, and so powerful was his appeal that Felix trembled; but his fear did not lead to true penitence. He persisted in his evil courses, and became the type of the vast body of unconverted hearers whose souls are risked by procrastination. "Go thy way for this time," said the trembling conscious sinner in response to Paul's urgent appeals; "when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." Exactly accordant to his character is the trait mentioned in Acts xxiv. 26: "He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul"—that is, that Paul or his friends would bribe him to set him free—"wherefore he sent for him the oftener and communed with him." When Felix was recalled (A. D. 60) he left Paul in prison, his case undecided.

The new governor, Porcius Festus, an upright man, had been but three days in the province when, going up from Cæsarea to Jerusalem, the case of Paul was laid before him by the high priest and other leading men of the nation. They

were probably urged on by some of the forty conspirators who had sworn, two years before, to assassinate Paul, but were disappointed by the vigorous measures of Claudius Lysias. They besought Festus to bring him back to Jerusalem, intending to set an ambush by the wayside and slay him before he reached the city. Festus, probably suspecting their intention, refused the request, but offered to reopen the case at Cæsarea if they would come down and present their accusations in regular form. "It is not a custom," said the upright governor, "for the Romans to deliver any man to die before he have the accusers face to face, and have license to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him."

Having no choice in the premises, the accusers consented, and in less than a fortnight from the time of the new governor's arrival this important case had a hearing before him. Festus evidently felt that Paul had been guilty of no serious offence, and probably would have discharged him at once if it had not been for the intense earnestness shown by the leading men of the Jews, whom he was unwilling to offend thus early in his term of office. He declined, however, to surrender the prisoner into their hands, and courteously left it to Paul himself whether he would go to Jerusalem for trial.

Paul doubtless fully appreciated the governor's courtesy, but he saw that it was time for him to

take a decided step; he had been held for two years a prisoner in Cæsarea; his plans of work were at a standstill; between Roman governors and Jewish Sanhedrims and sworn assassins there was no certainty what evil fate at any time might befall him; he had long been anxious to see Rome; he was a Roman citizen; he determined to use his privilege.

Then said Paul, "I stand at Cæsar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged. To the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. I appeal unto Cæsar."

No provincial officer could deal with a Roman citizen, unless he were a notorious bandit or pirate, who made such an appeal. For only a moment Festus consulted with his council; but the case was too clear to admit of doubt. The governor turned to the prisoner and simply said, "Thou hast appealed unto Cæsar; to Cæsar thou shalt be sent." But before leaving for the imperial court Paul was brought before the last of the Herods, Herod Agrippa II., whose father, Herod Agrippa I., had slain James and imprisoned Peter. This second Agrippa had charge of the temple in Jerusalem by appointment of the Roman emperor. Happening to make a visit to Cæsarea in company with his sister Bernice, Festus acquainted him with Paul's case, about which he was in perplexity, not knowing in what terms to lay it before the emperor. Agrippa, as belonging to a family

long identified with the Jews, would doubtless be able to clear it up. Moreover, curiosity to hear and see a man so remarkable as Paul influenced Agrippa to ask for an interview with the prisoner.

Accordingly, on the next day, with much pomp, with military display and the attendance of distinguished citizens of Cæsarea, Agrippa and his sister were escorted by Festus into the hall of justice, and Paul was summoned before them. Festus opened the proceedings with a ceremonious speech, showing the vehemence of the Jewish accusers of Paul, who thought him not fit to live, while he himself found no cause of death in the man. Now that he had appealed to Cæsar, he (Festus) knew not what explanation to make in handing him over to the imperial court. After the examination now to be held with Agrippa's help, he hoped to have some certain thing to write to his lord—that is, the emperor.

Leave was then given to Paul to speak for himself. He began by congratulating himself on the opportunity of speaking before a judge so well informed on Jewish customs as Agrippa. Agrippa must know that Paul's teaching was not contradictory of the Jewish Scriptures, but, on the contrary, was in fulfillment of the promises made to the fathers. Paul then briefly gave the history of his relations to Christianity, his zeal as a persecutor, his miraculous conversion and his activity in

spreading the gospel, and was proceeding to show the accordance of his doctrines with the Old Testament, especially in reference to the resurrection of the Messiah, when Festus, probably offended at this doctrine, interrupted him with a loud exclamation: "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning [or study] doth make thee mad."

The dignity and deep earnestness of Paul's reply sufficiently showed the undisturbed balance of his mind: "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness." And, turning to Agrippa, he appealed to his knowledge of the facts in the case, adding a solemn personal question: "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest."

It must have been with some uneasiness that Agrippa turned off with a stroke of irony the appeal: "Almost [or with a trifling effort, forsooth!] you will persuade me to turn Christian;" while Paul, sustaining the manly earnestness of his plea to the end, replied, "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, save these bonds!" Agrippa agreed with Festus that if Paul had not appealed to Cæsar there would have been no ground to detain him; he had done nothing deserving death or imprisonment. But, as Paul insisted on this course, he was sent to Rome on the first opportunity.

Agrippa, as director of the temple and controller

of the high priesthood, lived at Jerusalem. Here he greatly offended the Jews by building a palace on Mount Zion, directly overlooking the temple. He could lie on his couch and look down from the windows upon all the ceremonies that took place in the sacred courts. The priests, indignant at what they considered an intrusion, hastily ran up a wall on that side of the temple. Festus and Agrippa both insisted on the removal of the obstruction. The Jewish authorities, following the example of Paul, with the consent of Festus appealed to Nero. Nero's corrupt wife, Poppea, seems to have been interested in the Jews. Josephus calls her by the complimentary title "devout." At all events, through her influence the wall was allowed to stand, and Agrippa was shut off from his coveted view.

Festus, one of the best of governors, having died, was succeeded by Albinus, one of the worst. This was in the year 62, while Paul was a prisoner in Rome. The poor country groaned under exactions, enormous taxes, robbery and murder. The worst crimes went unpunished if the criminals paid a heavy ransom. The lower priesthood was left to starve, while the high priest and his party amassed enormous wealth. When Albinus heard that he was about to be recalled he ordered a general jail-delivery, executed the most notorious criminals and set free the rest on condition of paying a ransom. Thus the whole country was overrun with despe-

rate ruffians. Eighteen thousand workmen who had been employed in rebuilding the temple were just now discharged, and great fears were entertained of disorders arising among such multitudes of unemployed men. To give them employment the streets of Jerusalem were paved with stone.

The presence of a wise and just governor in place of the wicked Albinus might have improved the disturbed and ominous state of affairs. On the contrary, so bad a man was now sent (A. D. 65), that people earnestly wished Albinus back again. Gessius Florus has the unenviable distinction of having goaded the Jewish nation to open revolt against the Romans. Nothing more was needed to complete the combination of circumstances which must necessarily be followed by a grand explosion. Other evil-minded rulers had shown enough regard for law and right to hide, or pretend to hide, their misdeeds; the crimes of Florus were open and audacious. Whole communities and cities, as well as individuals, were his victims. No marauder or bandit was in danger of punishment who offered him a fair share of his booty. Many villages and towns were deserted by the inhabitants, who fled from his exactions as from an invading army.

In vain did the suffering people look for relief to the governor of Syria, the superior of Florus in authority. Cestius Gallus was of the same stamp as his subordinate in Judea. Having once visited Jerusalem immediately before the Passover, the

whole population thronged about him and besought his interference. But Florus stood by his side, and felt perfectly safe in turning the entreaties of three millions of wronged and incensed people into ridicule. No word of rebuke was administered by Gallus, who permitted Florus to escort him on his return to Antioch. His career of violence and wrong was uninterrupted. It was part of his plan to goad the people into open rebellion. In the excitement of such an event his crimes would escape detection; if peace continued his exposure was certain.

In the mean time alarming prodigies appeared in the heavens and the earth. The predictions uttered by our Saviour as he sat on the Mount of Olives were hastening to fulfillment. False prophets in great numbers arose and deluded the people with the promise of deliverance from the Roman power. A comet in the shape of a sword hung threatening in the sky above the city for a whole year. Josephus relates that in the middle of the night, while the multitude was observing the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a great light shone around the altar and lit up the whole interior of the temple for half an hour. We are also told that the huge brazen gate on the eastern portico of the temple, which required the strength of twenty men to move it on its hinges, broke from its bolts and fastenings and swung open of itself; the whole temple-guard was summoned by the watchmen,

and their united efforts were necessary to reclose it. At the Feast of Pentecost the priests, entering the Inner Court of the temple by night, heard a noise, attended with a tremor of the ground as if from the tread of thousands of feet, and presently a voice like that of a great host, saying, "Let us depart hence."

Again, the alarmed and excited multitude saw in the fantastic shapes of the clouds at sunset clearly-defined chariots and squadrons of armed men wheeling and manœuvring in the sky, and even cities attacked and besieged by the airy warriors.

More alarming than all: while the city was in entire peace, four years before the war began, a countryman bearing the name Jesus (or Joshua) began to cry aloud with these words of lamentation and warning: "A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds; a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house; a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides; a voice against the whole people." This melancholy cry, begun at the Feast of Tabernacles in the temple, was repeated day and night for more than seven years through the streets and lanes of the city. Many cruel beatings were inflicted upon the man, both by the Jewish and the Roman authorities, but he bore them all in silence, without shedding a tear. Nor would he answer a question, although the stripes cut through to the bone, but at every blow would

exclaim in the most sorrowful tone, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" Regarded as a madman by Albinus, he was finally allowed to go, and to reiterate his cry unmolested. His voice was loudest at the festivals, and during the whole seven years it never gave out or grew hoarse. Like a messenger from another sphere, holding no other communications with his fellow-men, he continued to warn them of the coming doom. At length the prophecy was fulfilled and the horrors of the siege began. Going around upon the wall, he uttered in his loudest tones, "Woe, woe to the city again, and to the people, and to the holy house!" and then adding, "Woe, woe to myself also!" As the words came from his mouth a stone hurled from a Roman ballista struck and killed him instantly.

Such strange portents were doubtless merciful warnings, which might well have cooled a little the fiery fanaticism of the Jewish mob. But if they were too furious and obstinate to listen to reason or to providence, the Christian inhabitants of the doomed city took timely warning, and were all safe outside of the city-walls before the Roman army had encircled it with its works.

CHAPTER XXIV.

OPENING SCENES OF THE WAR.

JOSEPHUS regards the war as having actually opened at Cæsarea, the famous city on the sea, created by the munificence of Herod the Great. The population of this city was made up of Jews and heathen Greeks, who had been jealous of each other from the beginning. Recently, the Greeks had obtained a decree from Nero making the Jews subject to their heathen fellow-citizens. This gave occasion for still further outbreaks and for keener jealousies.

The Jews had a synagogue in Cæsarea which was surrounded by land of the Greeks. This the owners not only refused to sell, but they proceeded to annoy the worshipers by putting up mean shops and buildings on the ground, and by making the entrance to the synagogue as narrow as possible. Unable to remedy the difficulty in any other way, the Jews appealed to Florus, and presented him with a very large sum of money in the hope that he would interfere and compel the Greeks to dispose of the ground or to remove the buildings. Florus took the money — he always did that—

and turned his back upon the petitioners. It was his policy to let discontent run its course into sedition.

A comparatively trivial event brought matters to a crisis. One of the heathen party provided himself with an earthen pot and a number of birds, and on the sabbath morning, when the Jews were crowding into the synagogue, took his stand near the entrance, and, turning the pot bottom upward, used it as a mock altar and sacrificed the birds upon it. A sacrifice of birds was required by the Jewish law in cleansing a leper who had been cured, and the act may have been intended to reproach the worshipers as a vile and loathsome company. The Jews were enraged, but finding it impossible to prevail against their adversaries, they retired to a village eight miles distant from Cæsarea, carrying their sacred books with them. A deputation was again sent to Florus, entreating his interference and reminding him of the large sum of money they had recently paid him. His only answer was to thrust the deputation into prison.

The people of Jerusalem were greatly excited at these events in Cæsarea, and Florus, instead of calming them by judicious measures, took the opportunity to urge one of the most exasperating measures upon the people. He demanded a contribution of seventeen talents (or fifty thousand dollars) from the temple-treasury, pretending that

the emperor required such a sum. The people were furious at the request, and yet there was some humor in the frantic crowd which quickly gathered around the temple, for some carried around baskets and asked alms for Florus as a destitute beggar.

Soldiers now appeared upon the scene to enforce the demand of Florus. The people were unusually peaceable at their approach, much to the disappointment of the infamous governor, who was eager for an outbreak. He demanded the surrender of the leaders of the mob. When they were not forthcoming the soldiers received permission to plunder and slay in the portion of the city known as the "upper market-place." In this massacre three thousand six hundred of the people were butchered. Even those Jews who, like Paul, had obtained the rights of Roman citizenship were scourged and crucified by command of the reckless governor. This occurred on the 16th of May, A. D. 66.

This wholly inexcusable slaughter was, if possible, a greater outrage from the repulse of Bernice, sister of Herod Agrippa, who happened to be in Jerusalem at this time, and who warmly interceded with Florus for her suffering countrymen. No attention was paid to her appeals, although she even stood barefoot and suppliant before the governor. The slaughter went on under her eyes, and she herself was compelled to withdraw with her guards lest she should be cut down among the rest.

More troops were sent for, and Florus required the aggrieved people to go out and meet them with demonstrations of respect. This they did, but when some seditiously-inclined persons cried out against Florus, the signal was given to the soldiers, who fell upon the people with clubs or rode them down. Many also perished by the crushing of the crowd seeking to escape from the soldiers and pushing and striving to get through the city-gates. But the great object of Florus, to throw his forces into the temple and seize the treasure there, was not effected. The masses of the people were actually so dense in the various passage-ways that all entrance was blocked and the Roman army was compelled to return to its camp. Florus, disappointed, withdrew to the city of Cæsarea.

Cestius Gallus, governor of Syria, was again appealed to by both Florus and the Jews. Bernice added her testimony to the remonstrances of the Jewish rulers, and made a piteous tale of the cruelty of Florus and the horrible outrages of his troops. Gallus was aroused, and deputed a centurion, Neopolitanus, to visit Jerusalem and inquire into the exact state of affairs. On the road the centurion fell in with Agrippa, and both proceeded on the journey together. A few miles out of the city they were met by a mournful procession. The women who had been made widows in the recent massacre were placed in front, and with shrieks and

outcries they recounted their calamities and wildly besought Agrippa for protection.

Arrived in Jerusalem, the two visitors were led to the ruined market-place and shown the desolation wrought in that quarter by the Roman cohorts let loose by Florus. Neopolitanus passed around the whole city, and convinced himself of the peaceable disposition of the people. He called the multitude together at the temple and exhorted them to maintain their fidelity to the Roman power; then, having worshiped in the Court of the Gentiles, he returned to Antioch.

Agrippa remained in Jerusalem, where his sister was still staying. Seeing that the people, under the provocations of their rulers, were rapidly drifting into open revolt, he called them together and made them a soothing address. He spoke rather lightly of their sufferings, and argued that peaceable submission was the best means of softening the minds of cruel rulers. "Cæsar at Rome," he said, "was not to blame for the evil deeds of his officers so far away as Judea. Bad rulers cannot last for ever. But as to fighting for their liberty, it was now too late. Their ancestors, far more powerful than themselves, had been unable to withstand the Roman power; even the Athenians, who had defeated Xerxes and his vast host, the Lacedemonians, who had conquered at Platea, and the Macedonians, who boasted of Philip and Alexander, with a multitude of other nations, had surrendered their liberty to

Rome. Were the Jews any stronger? Had they arms, ships or treasure sufficient to such a mighty undertaking? Was it the feeble Egyptians or Arabians on whom they proposed to make war?

"The power of Rome," he said, "is invincible. Not the Euphrates on the east, nor the Danube on the north, nor the sands of Libya on the south, nor Cadiz on the west, are remote enough to form boundaries for the Romans. They pass beyond the Pillars of Hercules. They hold and tame the tempestuous Black Sea. They cross the ocean and carry their arms into the British islands. They walk among the clouds upon the heights of the Pyrenees. After eighty years of war the valiant Gauls have submitted to their arms, and are kept in subjection by a body of soldiers not greater than the number of their cities. Not all the gold dug out of the mines of Spain could sustain a war long enough to win the liberty of the country from the Romans. The Germans, a great multitude, with a vast country, a people strong and tall, with minds greater than their bodies, and souls despising death, fiercer than wild beasts, are kept within their boundary, the Rhine, by eight legions.

"Remember the fate of the Carthaginians, whose great general, Hannibal, could not save them from submitting to Scipio. All Africa feels the Roman yoke, and sends its tribute of grain to feed the people of the imperial city. Where will you look for allies? All the habitable earth is subject to

Rome. God himself seems to have established this universal empire. Can you expect his aid in fighting against it? Must you not violate his ordinances and break his sabbaths? or will you cease on the sabbath day from all warlike movements and thus allow the Romans an easy victory? for, like Pompey in the time of your forefathers, they will work most busily on the day on which you rest. And if you break God's ordinances, how can you expect his aid?

"Better, far better, O friends, while the vessel is yet in the haven to foresee the approaching storm, and resolve not to sail away in the face of the impending hurricane. Assuredly, if you engage in such a war you can make no bargain with the Romans in advance; you can look for no moderate treatment from the victors. Rather will they make you an example to other nations; they will burn your city and utterly destroy your nation. You will find no place of refuge, since the whole earth belongs to the Romans or will shortly be theirs. And you will subject your brethren in all the cities and regions among which they are scattered to like dangers and evils with yourselves. Every place where Jews dwell will be filled with slaughter, and the murderers of your brethren will go free. Have pity upon them; have pity upon this sacred city; spare this temple and its holy furniture."

Agrippa closed his eloquent and powerful plea for peace by calling to witness the temple and the

holy angels of God and their common country that he had kept back nothing which was for their real welfare. Weeping, he said if they would follow his advice, they would prosper; if they insisted on war, he would not share the hazard and ruin which would result.

The tears of Agrippa and of his sister Bernice, who was present, had their effect. The tribute which was in arrears was collected; the broken galleries which connected Antonia with the temple-area, and which had been recently thrown down to prevent the approach of the Roman guard, were repaired. The war seemed at an end; Agrippa might begin to congratulate himself that he had saved his country from ruin and the temple from desecration and destruction. The happy fields and vineyards of Judea might yet be spared the tramp and havoc of armed hosts. The shady groves might still crown the heights of Olivet, unsmitten by the axe of the invader. The city might still swarm with cheerful worshipers at the great yearly festivals, and the temple-walls still ring with the priestly chants and the sacred courts be fragrant with sweet incense and the savor of burnt sacrifice.

Vain hope! The fierce passions, the burning sense of wrong, the rankling wound of national humiliation, only for a moment smothered, broke out again in all their violence. When Agrippa, continuing his efforts at pacification, suggested the

duty of obedience to Florus until Cæsar should send a substitute, the suppressed rage of the people burst forth. They would hear no more, but at that justly-hated name they broke out in reproaches against Agrippa himself. They cast stones at him, and actually drove him from the city.

Thus ended his well-meant efforts to avert the coming doom. He could only bewail the obstinacy and ingratitude of the city as he turned away and left it to its certain and dreadful fate.

CHAPTER XXV.

OPEN HOSTILITIES.

THE fortress Masada stood upon the edge of a precipice west of the Dead Sea, near its southern end. Built by one of the Maccabees, it had been greatly strengthened by Herod the Great. Here he had placed the women of his family for safe-keeping when driven from Jerusalem in the early part of his career. This important post was now held by Roman soldiers. The first open act of war was the seizure of the place by some of the bolder spirits among the Jews. The garrison was put to the sword and the standard of revolt floated from the rocky heights.

In Jerusalem the crisis was hastening, and one of its worst features, a decided division in the sentiments of the people, already appeared. An insult was offered to the Roman power by the decision of Eleazar, the rash and youthful governor of the temple, to reject all the offerings and sacrifices of foreigners, including the yearly offerings which had hitherto been received from the Roman emperor. High priest, Pharisees and chief men of the nation remonstrated with Eleazar, who had the sedi-

tious multitude at his back. They met the people by appointment, near the great brazen gate of the temple, which faced the east, and earnestly strove to persuade them of the peril and folly of offering what must certainly be taken as an insult to the powerful emperor. In vain were arguments and entreaties; the violent party prevailed and the offering was refused.

Feeling at once that the gravest consequences would follow this mutinous act, the party of peace sent word both to Agrippa and to Florus of the threatening state of affairs. Florus felt a satanic pleasure at this new step toward open rebellion. Agrippa, concerned, but not yet utterly despairing of the city and of the temple, despatched three thousand horse to aid in preserving the peace. As soon as they appeared in the city the lines between the contending factions were sharply drawn, and a kind of civil war broke out within the city itself in advance of that against Rome—a most unpromising beginning for the great struggle with a common foe which they must soon wage.

Eleazar and the fanatical party held the temple, a fortress in itself; the peace party, holding the upper part of the city on Mount Zion, and aided by Agrippa's horsemen, skirmished for a whole week in the hope of capturing this important position. There was slaughter on both sides, but Eleazar and his fanatics could not be dislodged. One of the numerous festivals now intervened—a "wood

carrying" festival; *Xylophory* it was called—when every Jew in the neighborhood brought a piece of wood to keep up the perpetual fire upon the altar. Eleazar and his party shut out their opponents from this festival.

They also received an accession to their numbers in that desperate band known as Dagger-wearers or *Sicarii*, a company of assassins too vile to be employed in a good cause, yet too dangerous to be allowed to oppose it. If both parties had joined to crush them it would have been an honorable act, and would have saved the whole struggle, as well as the national character itself, from some of its blackest stains. But Eleazar took courage from their arrival, and from this time his party had the advantage over their opposers. They carried the torch of the incendiary into the upper part of the city, and burned, among other important buildings, the public archives containing the records of debt, canceling at a blow the claims of the wealthy and peaceable inhabitants upon the poorer sort.

This act of course drew many of the debtor class to the side of the insurgents. It annihilated the influence of the wealthier class over those who before had been dependent upon them and ready to receive their advice. They became thenceforth the tools of Eleazar and his desperate crew. It was now necessary for the peace party to provide for their own safety. Some of them took refuge in sewers. A small garrison held the Tower of An-

tonia. In two days this powerful position was carried by the insurgents, who put the garrison to the sword and burned what was combustible of the structure.

But now a new leader appeared—a son of that Judas the Galilean who had first taught the Jews that rebellion against the Romans was a religious duty. "We have no lord and master but God," was his war-cry. Judas and his two elder sons had perished in the outset of their turbulent career. It was a younger son, Manahem, who now presented himself, and whom all the fanatical party were ready to welcome as a leader. Having equipped himself and his followers from the plunder of the fortress of Herod at Masada, he appeared before the walls of Jerusalem. The gates were flung open to receive him, and he entered the city with royal pomp. Under his direction the siege of the palace was pressed with vigor, and part of it was captured. The high priest and his friends were dragged from the sewers where they had taken refuge and put to death.

These successes of Manahem elated him to such a pitch of arrogance that he became intolerable to his associates. His pompous and gorgeous manner of going to the temple to worship, as if he were a king, carried their indignation to the highest pitch. They attacked him and his party with stones while they were at worship, and afterward put Manahem to a cruel death. His followers

fled, and Eleazar was left, as before, at the head of the movement.

Many rejoiced to hear of the execution of Manahem; they hoped that with his death the violence of the movement would abate. The insurgents, on the contrary, were glad to have him out of the way; they continued to besiege a remnant of the Roman garrison which had taken refuge in the towers of the palace. Finally, the besieged offered to surrender if their lives were spared. A solemn promise and oath to this effect were given by the Jewish leaders, and the soldiers marched out of the fortress. But scarcely had they laid down their arms when Eleazar's soldiers flew upon them, surrounded them and put all of them except the leader to death, unheeding the appeals which the dying men made to the oaths on which they had depended.

The Roman loss was light, but the provocation given by this day's massacre was felt to be beyond all remedy. Gloomy forebodings and public lamentations filled the city. Even God himself, they said, must punish such abominable deeds, the enormity of which was enhanced by the fact that they were perpetrated on the sabbath. A signal punishment was, in fact, inflicted. On the same day on which these pledges were dishonored and the Roman soldiers murdered, the Gentile inhabitants of Cæsarea rose against their Jewish neighbors and put them all to death. So well was

the diabolical plot laid that twenty thousand Jews were slain in a single hour. The few that escaped slaughter were seized by Florus and sent to the galleys. So the beautiful city was completely stripped of its Jewish population. It was a more overwhelming blow than St. Bartholomew's Day to the Protestants in Paris.

No wonder the whole nation was driven to madness by this act. It seemed as if a decree of annihilation had gone forth against it, and as if all rights and duties were merged in the one primary instinct of self-preservation. What had been done in Jerusalem was inexcusably dishonorable and bad, but it was between armed men; at Cæsarea men, women and children were slaughtered like sheep for the shambles. Not only revenge, but self-defence, prompted the Jews in other places to similar acts of slaughter. They fell suddenly upon a score or more of cities and villages stretching from Gaza on the south to the Syrian borders on the north; some of them they utterly demolished; the suburbs of others they devastated, plundering and slaughtering at a fearful rate. Even the guilty Cæsarea was attacked, and Samaria itself did not escape their ravages.

Reprisals of course followed on the other side. The Syrians were alarmed for their personal safety, and turned upon the Jews wherever they were not prepared or in sufficient numbers for self-defence. Every city was divided into two hostile camps, and

each had a kind of civil war on its own account. Disorder and bloodshed prevailed everywhere. The day was spent in fighting, the night in fear. Even where there was no mutual enmity, greed of gain was a sufficient motive for violence and bloodshed. The property of the slain was carried off by the murderers. He was esteemed the greatest hero who had accumulated the most spoil.

When the marauding bands of the Jews, in their mission of revenge, had reached Scythopolis, a city on the northern border of Samaria, they were surprised to find their own brethren arrayed with the Gentile population and ready to resist them. These Jews believed that by this means they would the better secure their peace and safety with their Gentile fellow-citizens. Vain expectation! No sooner had the invaders been driven from Scythopolis (the old Bethshean) than the Jews and their families were removed to a neighboring grove, and on the third night, while sleeping securely, the Gentile inhabitants fell upon them and murdered them all, to the number of thirteen thousand.

Other cities of mixed heathen and Jewish population emulated these bloody examples. Two thousand five hundred Jews were slain in one city, two thousand in another. In other cities only the most prominent of the Jews were slain, while many others were put in prison. A few cities were honorable exceptions to this carnival

of terror and rapine. Antioch, Sidon, Apamea and Gerasa would not suffer their Jewish inhabitants to be disturbed. Meanwhile, the insurgents got possession of two strong places outside the borders of Judea—the citadel of Cypros above Jericho, and the fortress of Machærus, east of the Dead Sea, where John the Baptist was beheaded.

Thus war was actually waging, and the Roman governor of Syria, Cestius Gallus, determined to meet it with all his available force. With an army of nearly ten thousand Roman soldiers and thirteen thousand allies he advanced from Antioch to Ptolemais, on the sea-coast above Mount Carmel. Volunteers swelled his forces on the march; Agrippa himself accompanied the expedition. Arrived at Zebulun, a city of Galilee, he found it empty of inhabitants, but full of good things. The army was allowed to plunder at its leisure, and then the torch was applied to the empty buildings, and the city, which ranked with the most beautiful of its time, was reduced to ashes.

Surprises and counter-surprises followed. The soldiers of Cestius overran the country, plundering and burning. The Jews hung about the skirts of the army, and at one time cut off and destroyed two thousand men who had become detached from the main body. On the other hand, Cestius sent a portion of his army to Joppa, which moved in two divisions—one by the shore, and the other upon an interior line. So rapid and so secret was

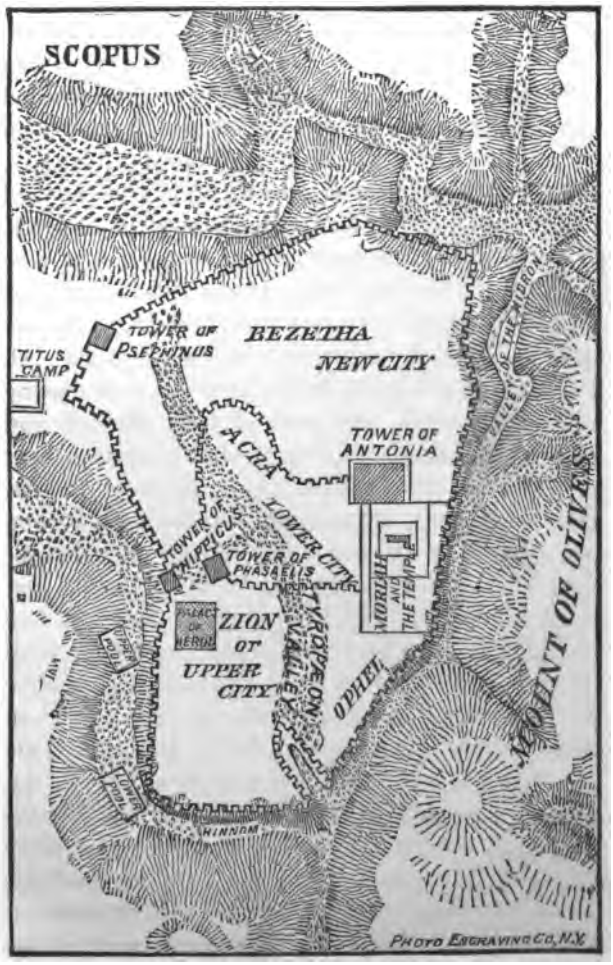
the march of these divisions that the inhabitants were completely surprised. The city was captured without a struggle; the inhabitants were indiscriminately butchered to the number of eight thousand, and the city plundered and burned.

After some other minor successes the Roman army was gathered at Cæsarea, and began its march upon Jerusalem. And now its embarrassments began. Had the commander been a man of energy and military skill, his errand would have been arduous enough. He might have struck such prompt and telling blows as would have disheartened the unorganized bands which were rising on every hand to beset his path. But his course was marked by needless delays and seeming hesitation of purpose. The Jews, who were gathering in great multitudes to celebrate one of their feasts, laid aside their preparations, and, filled with rage and determination, rushed out of Jerusalem on the sabbath day. They met the Roman forces at the famous pass of Beth-horon, twelve miles west of Jerusalem, where Joshua had defeated five hostile kings and their armies, and where Judas the Maccabee had won a great victory over Antiochus Epimanes. Inspired perhaps by these reminiscences, they attacked the Roman army with such impetuosity that they cut it in two and put the whole in peril of defeat. Five hundred and fifteen of the Romans were slain before the Jews could be repulsed, their own loss being but twenty-two.

Even after the main body of the Jews had retired to Jerusalem the rear of the Roman column was assailed and a quantity of arms was captured and carried into the city. Cestius now halted on the heights of Beth-horon and waited three days, which the Jews improved by fortifying the elevated positions in the city and setting a guard at the gates.

Once more Agrippa interfered to prevent, if possible, the calamity of war. It was a last effort; and it was frustrated in a way that showed the desperation and blind fanaticism which must needs rush to its doom and fulfill to the letter the dark destiny of a people who had rejected their Messiah and crucified the incarnate Son of God. Agrippa sent a deputation to persuade his countrymen to surrender, offering, in the name of Cestius, full pardon for all that had passed. He hoped either to convince both parties of the people, or to separate permanently the soberer part from the fanatical faction. But before the two messengers, who were persons well known to the Jews, had time to utter a word, one of them was slain and the other was wounded and compelled to fly for his life. This act of the insurgents made a division among the people, some of whom took sides with the deputation and severely handled their opponents. But the attempt at pacification was a failure, and the march of events was not hindered or delayed.

Cestius now advanced to within a mile of the city, and took position to the north on a hill called



MAP OF ANCIENT JERUSALEM.

Scopus. After three days' delay he entered the suburbs, from which the insurgents retired in consternation at the formidable order and array of the Roman legions. Burning the dwellings before him, he advanced to the inner wall, and pitched his camp opposite the strong positions of the palace and the temple. Had he immediately assailed the walls in front of him, we are told he would have had an easy victory, but, like not a few generals of besieging armies, he preferred caution to dash, and so allowed the favorable moment to pass unimproved. Josephus deplores this delay, since, in his opinion, the capture of the city at that time would at once have ended the war. He lays the blame on the governor, Florus, who for his own purpose desired that the war should be prolonged. Florus, he says, bribed a great number of the Roman officers, and so prevented an immediate attack.

A large party of the people now made overtures to Cestius, and offered to open the gates for him. Again he hesitated, until the Zealots within discovered the plot and punished its authors by throwing them down from the city-wall. For five days the Romans continued their desultory attacks without success. They then assailed the northern wall of the temple, and when the Jewish darts rained down upon them like hailstones, they put their shields over their heads, and, standing or crouching close together, lapped one shield over the edge of another, and thus formed a complete cov-

ering like the crust or shell of a single huge animal; this arrangement was known as the *testudo*, or tortoise, and was a regular and effective manœuvre of the Roman army in carrying on a siege.

And now a horrible fear ran through the city as the Roman soldiers, under the protection of their shields, maintained their ground, undermined the wall and prepared to set fire to the gate of the temple. But of this panic Cestius seemed not to be aware, and if he heard of the existence of a large body of sympathizers within the walls, he either did not believe it or did not care to trust his army to them. Suddenly he suspended his operations, renounced his advantages and withdrew from the temple-wall. It was an act so difficult to account for that naturally it was ascribed to a higher power than man. Josephus regarded it as proving the divine anger, for he believed that if the city had been captured then all the subsequent horrors of the war would have been avoided. Others supposed that this was the opportunity pointed out to the disciples by the Saviour,* when they might escape to a place of safety and avoid all the coming woes of the siege. Now, it is supposed, the Christians made good their escape to Pella, a village east of the Jordan, fifteen miles south of the Lake of Tiberias; and certainly none perished, since not one was deceived

* Matt. xxiv. 15, 16.

by the false promises and expectations on which multitudes depended to their ruin.

The unexpected retreat of Cestius fired the zeal of the insurgents and patriots. They boldly pursued the retiring army, and cut off numbers both of horse and foot. As the Romans continued to retreat, the pursuers became more and more audacious. They fell upon them both in flank and rear. They hovered around the Roman column, which dared not break ranks to repulse them lest they should be broken into fragments and swallowed up by the immense numbers of the Jews. With great difficulty the Romans gained a fortified camp, with loss of several prominent officers and many privates and a great part of their baggage. Here they remained two days, while the Jewish forces continued to increase and all the surrounding heights swarmed with men. The camp could not be held against such a multitude. A rapid flight was necessary. Everything that could hinder the movement was abandoned or sacrificed. Mules and other beasts of burden were slain. The retreat was continued without great difficulty until the pass of Beth-horon, fatal to the enemies of Judea, was reached. In this narrow and steep defile they were beset by their pursuers behind, before and on the flanks. Defence was almost impossible. The heavily-armed soldiers and the cavalry tumbled down over the precipices and into the chasms and valleys. Every one had to

provide for his own safety. Despairing cries now broke from the cooped-up army, which were answered by shouts of mingled exultation, defiance and rage from the Jews.

Had the miracle of the lengthening of the day, recorded in the book of Joshua in connection with a flight and pursuit in the same locality, now been repeated, the same fate would have befallen the army of Cestius as that which was visited upon the five kings of the Amorites and their hosts. It would have been utterly destroyed as an army. Night alone saved it. Leaving behind a guard of four hundred men, who were instructed to keep up the appearance of an extensive camp, the Roman general continued his retreat noiselessly in the darkness with the remnant of his forces, and reached Antipatris before his pursuers, who had waited until morning, came up with him. Meanwhile, the devoted four hundred were quickly surrounded and slain, and the implements and engines of war which had been abandoned by the flying army, and the immense spoils of the slain, were collected by the Jews and carried back with songs of triumph to Jerusalem. This was on the 8th of November, A. D. 66. In this disastrous and disgraceful retreat the Romans lost no less than five thousand six hundred and eighty men, while the loss of the Jews was trifling. A Roman eagle—a military standard—was among the spoils captured by the Jews. Never before

in its history had the Roman army experienced such a shameful overthrow; it had suffered the loss of a greater number of men in the defeat of Varus by the Germans, when three legions were cut to pieces, and again when thirty thousand men under Crassus perished in the deserts of Mesopotamia through the treachery of their guide. But neither German swamps and forests, nor Arabian sands, nor the ignorance of the country, could excuse this disaster. It was wholly the result of unsoldier-like conduct and unaccountable delays on the part of the Roman commander.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE ROMAN POWER TESTED.

THESE events could not discourage the imperial government at Rome. Wounded pride and indignation were the predominant feelings when the news of the disaster to the army was received. In some quarters, it is true, consternation too was felt at the remarkable vigor and desperate courage shown by so small and obscure a nation. But there was no movement to abandon the struggle or to negotiate with the insurgents. The ablest general in the Roman army, Vespasian, was immediately placed in charge of the revolted province. His movements were prompt and decisive. He sent Titus, his son, to Alexandria to conduct the two legions quartered there to Palestine, while he traveled with all speed by land to Syria, gathering up all the available forces by the way. Thus, like a great ever-swelling wave, the Roman host rolled on toward the doomed territory, and, in the early spring of the year 67, Vespasian appeared at Antioch at the head of a powerful army.

This brings us near to the close of the reign of Nero, who died A. D. 68. It was about this year

(from 66 to 68) that Paul was beheaded in Rome; his martyrdom was one of the last acts of that monster of cruelty and wickedness. Probably the excitement caused by the defeat of Cestius led to the renewed persecutions of the Christians as of men closely connected with the rebellious Jews. The blows struck by the insurgents at Jerusalem and at Beth-horon thus were felt upon the neck of Paul.

When the Jews learned of this great and crushing movement, and when they heard the name of the famous general who was to lead it against them, they gathered up their strength for a desperate struggle. Some, it is true, abandoned the cause as hopeless; but the mass of the people yielded to the guidance of the insurgents and Zealots and plunged into the unequal strife. A general assembly was convened in the temple, where leaders and commanders were chosen. Eleazar, the fanatical leader of the first insurrection, was passed over in the election, but he soon after managed to gain control over the movement. Most of the leaders, however, were of the more moderate party.

Josephus, the historian of the Jews, was chosen governor of Galilee, the province on which the first storm of war would burst. He was a citizen of Jerusalem, descended, on his mother's side, from the famous family of the Maccabees. He was a precocious youth, if we may accept his own statement. He tells us that at the age of fourteen years

he held conversations with the chief priests similar to that recorded of Jesus in the temple at twelve years of age. After studying, at sixteen years of age, the peculiarities of the three sects, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, he chose the latter and retired to the desert, and for three years lived the life of a hermit. At nineteen, however, he returned to Jerusalem and joined the Pharisees. At twenty-six he undertook a voyage to Rome to defend certain Jewish priests, and although the vessel was shipwrecked in the Adriatic and many of the crew and passengers perished, he reached Rome, succeeded in his errand, and was loaded with presents by the empress Poppea, the wife of Nero. Meantime he had made himself master of the Greek language, in which he wrote his various historical books.



JOSEPHUS.

At the opening of the war Josephus strongly advocated peace, and consequently became an object of suspicion and dislike to the Zealots. It is not clear that he ever changed his real sentiments, but when hostilities could no longer be averted he took such a position outwardly as to win the confidence of both the violent and more conservative parties; and his after conduct as governor of Galilee, up to the time of his capture by the Romans, was certainly that of a patriot who did the very

best for his country that his means and resources allowed.

Josephus was a stranger to the Galileans. Among such a turbulent people the office of a ruler is full of difficulties, demanding no ordinary degree of prudence and skill. Josephus showed himself equal to the situation. He conciliated the leading men of the region by sharing his power with them. He established courts of justice, following the wise laws of Moses in his arrangements. He fortified cities and passes, and even caves and heights and rocks which could be used as strongholds. He introduced some of the Roman ranks and offices into the army, and drilled and disciplined the soldiers, telling them that the good order, the strength and the courage of the Romans had made them masters of the habitable world. He warned them to abstain from crime, from robbery, rapine and fraud. He charged them especially not to harm their countrymen, since they would thereby harm themselves. "Wars," he said, "are then best managed when the warriors preserve a good conscience. Evil men, as soldiers, will not only find their foes in the enemies' ranks, but will have God also for their antagonist."

An army of seventy thousand men was raised for active service in the field, besides the strong garrisons left in the cities; for Galilee was a densely-populated region, abounding in cities and villages, the least of which, according to Josephus,

contained fifteen thousand inhabitants. The people were bold, hardy and warlike, but, not being pure Jews, they were regarded as somewhat barbarous by the people of Judea. Hence such expressions as those in John vii. 41: "Shall Christ come out of Galilee?" and again (verse 52): "Art thou also of Galilee? Search and look, for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."

But difficulties without end met and defeated the prudent measures of Josephus. The turbulent province needed to be controlled by a hand armed with absolute power. Dissensions bitter and bloody arose between the mixed populations into which many of the cities were divided. A crafty and powerful opponent to Josephus arose in the person of John of Giscala, who derived his name from the village in which he lived, and who began his career as one of the famous or infamous robbers of Galilee. When the war began he was at the head of four thousand banditti, picked out by their leader for strength, bravery or skill in war. Such a personage might well prove a great power for good or evil in those most critical times.

Troubles had arisen in Sepphoris, a city about halfway between the Sea of Tiberias and the Mediterranean; in Tiberias, on the sea, which claimed to be the capital city; and in the village of Giscala. The former were soon pacified. Giscala had been assaulted and burned by the Galilean patriots because the inhabitants, with

John himself, were suspected of leaning to the Romans. John, however, had rallied his forces and recovered the place, and had fortified it more strongly than before. At present he was on very good terms with Josephus, and submitted his plans to him for approval. But it was not long before he more or less openly assailed him, and circulated reports which accused the governor of treasonable correspondence with the Romans.

The conduct of Josephus himself was not by any means clear of all suspicion. His life was in great danger once from a popular commotion brought on by the unsatisfactory manner in which he disposed of certain spoils taken from robbers; and once, when addressing a crowded assembly in Tiberias, he was attacked by a band of assassins sent by John of Giscala, and was obliged to leap down from the rostrum and to rush to the beach, where, with two of his followers, he seized a boat and pushed out into the lake. Other plots were formed to deprive him of his office and his life. The authorities at Jerusalem, at the suggestion of John, sent messengers to recall him from Galilee. But he managed to retain his position and to disappoint all his enemies.

One can hardly credit the account which Josephus gives of these events, so brief is the period in which he describes them as occurring. Within a single year—indeed, during a single winter—he raised, armed and drilled nearly seventy thousand

men; he fortified numerous cities and strongholds; he established a complete civil government; took Sepphoris twice, Tiberias four times, and Gadara once; overthrew the plots, defeated the troops and captured the person of his enemy, John of Giscala. This sounds impossible, fabulous; and the reputation of Josephus as an historian is open to question unless we allow him great latitude in the order and the time of the events which he describes.

But the whole history of events in Galilee reveals the fearfully divided and distracted condition of the people, and shows the one weak point which rendered their final overthrow before the solid masses of Rome inevitable. They were, in fact, quite as bitterly opposed to one another as to their common enemy. Had they been united and animated with a right religious spirit, like the followers of Huss in Bohemia, of Cromwell in England or of the Maccabees in their own early history, they would have been invincible. But, as if smitten by divine justice, they turned their arms against one another and wasted their strength in endless bickerings.

The warlike preparations in Jerusalem, however, went forward with less interruption. The clatter of arms and the din of preparation were heard on every side. The tramp of the young men drilling in public halls, the ringing of the anvils on which armor and spears and darts were fabricated, the

crash and rattle of the stones and the tools of the masons who were repairing and strengthening the city-walls, mingled with the general tumult of a great city preparing for a siege. Sad forebodings of the future filled the hearts of the more moderate classes. Not a few clearly foresaw the grievous calamities, the miseries and the ruin which this wild revolt would bring upon the Holy City. Josephus says the very state of the city, even before the Romans came against it, was that of a place doomed to destruction.

But whatever mistrust, dislike or opposition any might inwardly feel toward the movement, they were constrained to hide their real sentiments, for the dagger of the Zealot or the Assassin was the ready means of correcting all dissent from the will of the leaders. Hence, even the more moderate party found it their only safe course to join in the revolt; by so doing they might possibly infuse some measure of prudence and humanity into the policy of the war.

In such times, however, it is the audacious and unscrupulous who are sure to come to the front. The chief priest, Ananus, a comparatively moderate man, was at the head of affairs in the city. As Josephus had his John to contend with in Galilee, so Ananus had a foe in the fierce Simon, son of Gioras, in Judea. Simon had rendered good service with his robber band in harassing the retreating columns of Cestius the year before. He now

turned upon his own countrymen, and carried on a course of indiscriminate plunder. Ananus was compelled to send troops against him. The Idumeans in the south-east were also constrained to raise an army and to set a guard in every village against Simon. The disturbances and wars which he caused were such that he came to be dreaded as much as the Romans. Finally, gaining possession of a portion of Jerusalem, he became the leader of one of the factions into which the city was divided, and which fought against each other as violently as they did against the enemy at their gates.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE CAMPAIGN IN GALILEE.

VERY early in the spring of 67 the Roman army rendezvoused at Ptolemais. Titus, with unexpected promptness, had brought the fifth and tenth legions from Alexandria in Egypt to Ptolemais or Acis (now Acre), the chief seaport of Galilee. Here he met his father Vespasian, who had marched with the fifteenth legion and eighteen cohorts from Antioch. Many other cohorts of both foot and horse from the surrounding country joined the forces of Titus and Vespasian. The native princes sent bands of auxiliaries, so that the army amounted to sixty thousand men, besides a vast body of servants who were almost as good in war as trained soldiers.

The Roman army at this time was perhaps at the very height of its efficiency. In valor, in thorough discipline and complete system, in military enthusiasm and in the self-confidence caused by a long succession of conquests, no engine of warfare that had appeared in the history of man could compare with it. Headed by the ablest generals of the time, it had planted its crushing forces on the soil of Palestine, and now moved forth in

stately array to quell the passionate but unorganized armies of the rebellion.

First in the line of march came the auxiliaries, archers and light-armed forces, who acted as pio-



ROMAN SOLDIER.

neers and skirmishers to guard the main body from sudden attacks and ambuscades. These were supported by a part of the heavy-armed cavalry and

infantry, marching close behind. Next followed a detachment of ten from every hundred, carrying their arms and measuring-apparatus for laying out a camp. Then came a body of axemen and pioneers, whose business it was to remove obstructions, to cut down trees and to make the road as easy as possible for the passage of the army. Behind them was the baggage of the officers and the general attended by a strong guard. Then followed the general-in-chief with his picked body-guard of horse, foot and lancers. Next came the siege-train, the various parts of the great military engines—the catapults and the battering-rams—packed and borne upon mules. Next marched the commanders of legions and cohorts, each attended by chosen soldiers. Then followed the military standards, the chief of which was the Roman eagle, of which each legion had one. The eagles were followed by the trumpeters, and behind them marched the main body of the army in solid phalanxes, the files of men being six deep. Centurions brought up the rear and prevented straggling. The servants took charge of the baggage and beasts of burden. Another army of mercenaries, or hired soldiers, followed the Roman legions, and the whole immense procession was closed by a powerful rear-guard composed of light- and heavy-armed infantry and a numerous body of cavalry.

To the true Jewish patriot, anxious for his country's deliverance, but aware of the deep divisions

and jealousies which were crippling the nation's power, this magnificent army, drilled, disciplined and completely armed, and marching with the precision and order of a vast machine, must have been an awful spectacle. Vespasian, in fact, gained a victory without striking a blow. He halted his army and waited. Terror spread on every side. The army of Josephus did not pause even for a sight of the Romans, but on the bare rumor of their approach scattered and fled in such numbers that Josephus was left almost alone. It was in vain to attempt to meet the enemy with the handful of forces which was left to him. So sunken were the spirits of the Jews of Galilee, and so ready were they to come to terms, that the effect was the same as if they had actually fought a battle and suffered a crushing defeat.

Despairing thus of the war at the very outset, Josephus gathered the remnant of his army and fled to Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee. Meanwhile, Vespasian, unopposed, advanced upon the city of Gabara, near Ptolemais. The place was without defenders, and was captured without a blow. No mercy was shown to these unwarlike people. The youth were put to the sword; the city and the surrounding villas were burned; such of the inhabitants as had not fled were slain or sold into slavery.

The people of Tiberias were thrown into consternation by the appearance of Josephus with

the fragments of his army within their walls. If their leader had given up, the case was indeed desperate. This Josephus had not done, however convinced in his own mind he might be as to the disastrous results and final failure of the rebellion. He wrote a faithful statement of the magnitude of the undertaking to the authorities at Jerusalem, and admonished them either to come to terms with the Romans without delay or to send him an army powerful enough to meet the enemy in the field.

Having despatched this message, he threw himself into the fortified town of Jotopata, which the enemy was threatening, and into which a large part of the disbanded army of Josephus had fled. Jotopata was a small town midway between Tiberias and the Mediterranean coast. Its site is not now identified with certainty. It is quite unknown in Scripture or Jewish history except for the part it played in this conflict, and that has made it for ever famous. Perched on a jagged cliff and accessible from only one direction, where the hill sloped toward the north, it had been so well fortified that it was regarded as the strongest position in all Galilee. Already it had repulsed one attack hastily made by a detachment of the Roman army before Vespasian began his march. Pride and shame impelled the Romans to renew the assault.

The arrival of the commander Josephus in Jotopata revived the spirits of the defenders; at

the same time it quickened the eagerness of the enemy; for a deserter bore news of the presence of Josephus to the Roman general, and he, to ensure the capture of his famous opponent, set a special guard of horsemen around the place. The very next day Vespasian put his whole army in motion. They marched over the broad and level way which had been prepared by the pioneers and axemen, and late in the evening of the 15th of May the head of the column appeared upon a hill less than a mile to the north of the city and in full view of the wondering inhabitants.

As rank after rank spread out upon either hand until a complete circle was formed around the city, and as the cohorts and legions still pressed on and still spread out, forming a second circle, beyond which still the cavalry took their station, forming a third enclosing line, the hearts of the beleaguered people sank within them. This triple wall of armed men could never be broken. It was fold upon fold of a huge monster, which, gradually tightening its coils, must crush its captive at last.

If any proof of the sincerity of Josephus was wanting, his conduct at the siege of Jotopata ought to be sufficient. He might have gained honors and wealth in abundance by going over to the enemy at that time, but he chose to relinquish the safety afforded by Tiberias and the open country, and deliberately cast in his lot with a city which he knew to be doomed to the horrors of a siege

which would avail nothing except to delay the final and certain overthrow. Such an act on his part would not save his country, and would expose him to the cruel and humiliating fate which victorious Roman generals were accustomed to inflict upon captives taken in war. It would only furnish an example of courage and devotion, and encourage his countrymen everywhere to maintain the unequal and desperate struggle in which they were engaged.

Josephus makes no boast of his patriotism, but simply gives us a record of the events of the siege. He says the garrison were not so much terrified by the great Roman army hemming them in on every side as they were rendered desperate. To surrender now would not improve their condition; nothing was left them but to resist gallantly to the last. Their first consternation was exchanged for that fierce and dangerous valor which perplexed and almost baffled the bravest troops and ablest generals of the Roman army.

The attack upon Jotopata was commenced the next day, May 16th. The Jews bravely faced their enemy and pitched a camp outside of the city-walls. The battle lasted through the entire day. The Romans attempted to carry the north wall by assault. Slingers and archers from a distant point attempted to drive back the Jews, while Vespasian and the infantry advanced upon the wall. Josephus, gathering the whole strength of the garrison, rushed down upon the ascending column and drove

it back to the camp. Great valor was displayed on both sides. The Romans fought with the skill and steadiness of trained soldiers; the Jews fought with an impetuosity that was nearly overwhelming. The losses in killed were not great, but many were wounded. The Romans had thirteen killed and many wounded. Of the Jews, seventeen were slain and six hundred wounded. But the assault failed, and victory rested, for the present, with the brave garrison.

The next day the Jews themselves, emboldened by success, began the attack. Like the Americans after their first encounter with the British at Bunker Hill, they had lost much of their awe for the enemy. They advanced beyond the walls and fought with greater courage and desperation than before. The Romans, too, stung with a sense of shame, resisted with more determined steadiness than before; so that no actual progress was made by either side. Thus for five days the struggle continued. The Jews repeated their furious sallies —the Romans resisted and drove them back as often.

Vespasian, seeing now that it was useless to attempt to carry the place by assault against such active and spirited opponents, changed his original plans and proceeded by the slower method of a regular siege. He set all his army at work preparing to raise an immense embankment immediately opposite the northern wall, where the city was

most accessible. A party was sent out to cut down and gather vast quantities of wood. The beleaguered citizens saw their trees fall like grain before the sickle of the reaper; all the surrounding country was stripped to barrenness. Others dug earth and stones, and brought them in great abundance to the camp. Still others wove together a strong barrier of wickerwork, under which the builders of the mound were sheltered from the stones and weapons continually hurled from the walls.

While the mound was rising behind these hurdles, Vespasian prepared no less than a hundred and sixty engines for hurling great stones, javelins,



THE BALLISTA.

darts and burning arrows into the city. When these were set in motion, and when the skillful Arab bowmen with detachments of slingers plied the garrison with their unceasing flights of well-

aimed missiles, the walls became untenable; the Jews were fain to hide themselves. Only in small detachments, like bands of robbers, they stole out from the gates and in unexpected moments fell upon the Roman soldiers at work on the embankments. They threw down the hurdles, slew or drove off the soldiers—who, as workmen, were not protected by their armor—and hastily scattered the earth and stones, set fire to the woodwork, and then quickly retreated within the city-walls.

Vespasian, though sorely annoyed, was not seriously embarrassed in his work. He proceeded steadily until he had united all the bands of workmen and left no part exposed to flank attack. The terrible mound grew in spite of all the devices of the garrison to prevent it. But Josephus was not to be outdone by the Romans in wall-building, and as the Roman builders required to be protected against the darts and other missiles of the Jews, so the Jews were unable to do a stroke of work until Josephus contrived a shelter of raw ox-hides, against which the stones and the burning arrows of the Romans fell harmlessly, while immediately behind it the busy workmen, toiling day and night, reared their new walls and towers, adding thirty feet of perpendicular height to the old structure.

It was a discouraging sight to the Romans when, after their long and often fiercely-interrupted labors were completed, they beheld the new towers and battlements rising above the old, and saw them-

selves doomed to new pains and labors by their indefatigable enemy. New boldness also animated the Jews. They renewed their early sallies against the Romans. Every day fresh conflicts arose between besiegers and besieged. There were incessant plunderings and burnings in the Roman lines. No progress whatever seemed to be made in the reduction of the city.

Vespasian cautioned his soldiers against replying too vigorously to these fiery attacks. He knew well that they could not last. His encircling army held the city securely in its folds. No supplies, as he imagined, could enter Jotopata through his compact lines. The Jews had no army in the field to molest his own, and thus to co-operate with the garrison in raising the siege. By and by, weakened by famine and unable to man the walls, the besieged would fall an easy prey to his great army. It would be the wiser though less exciting course to let time help in the overthrow of the city.

However, the activity of the garrison was so great, and the methods and contrivances of Josephus so provoking, that the caution of Vespasian was overcome as his hope of prevailing by mere delay was for the time being disappointed. The stores of provisions in the city were abundant, but the supply of water was scanty. No rain could be expected to fall during the summer, and it was upon the rain that the place depended for its supply. The water was therefore carefully meas-

ured out to the garrison and the people, and much discomfort and suffering began to be felt, especially by the thirsty workmen, and by the wounded, whose first cry always is for water.

All this was surmised by the Romans to be the case, and it added to their hopes of an early surrender of the city; but what was their astonishment at this time to see the Jews hanging out a great quantity of clothing dripping wet, so that the entire face of the north wall was moistened by the precious streams thus running to waste! It was one of the audacious contrivances of Josephus, designed to give the enemy a false impression of the resources of the garrison. The wisdom of the act appears questionable; it was likely to weaken and distress on the one side quite as much as to surprise and discourage on the other. Josephus, however, explains that it was his intention, by such means, to compel the Roman general to change his plan and once more to employ the violent methods which he had abandoned. This, he says, was preferred by the Jews; they despaired either of delivering their city or of escaping themselves, and so they hoped for death in battle rather than by the slow torture of hunger and thirst.

A single unguarded avenue on the precipitous side of the hill on which the city was built remained open to the besieged. Through this Josephus held communication with the open country. Letters were carried out, and such supplies as

could be conveyed in small quantities were brought in by men crawling on all fours and disguised in the skins of sheep. At length the enemy discovered this passage-way, and, setting a closer watch, absolutely prevented all further communication between the garrison and its friends outside.

At this point Josephus frankly tells us he began to consider how he might save his own life in the certain destruction which he foresaw coming upon the city. He admitted the leading men of the city to his deliberations. But when his proposed flight became known the whole multitude rose up against it. While he stayed, they urged, there was still some hope of safety; if he should leave, all was lost. With him as leader every one would cheerfully undertake whatever he proposed; if he should leave, no one would venture to oppose the enemy. With singular candor Josephus relates to us the plea, which he himself admits was false, by which he endeavored to satisfy the clamor of the citizens: "I am going, not for my sake, but for yours. Cooped up in the city, I can do you no good, but will only perish with you. Once outside, I can render you the greatest service. I will raise all Galilee, and come against the besiegers with a great army and draw them away from your walls. It is I whom they most desire to capture in your city. If I were once away they would care very little for Jotopata, and would probably abandon the siege."

But the people could not be persuaded; even the children, with the old men and the women carrying their infants, fell down before him and clung to his feet, beseeching him with loud outcries that he would share their lot, whatever it might be; believing, says Josephus (with evident self-flattery), that they could not suffer any great misfortune provided Josephus would but stay with them. Plainly, it was not possible for him to get away in the face of such opposition. So, making a virtue of necessity, he entered upon the defence of the city with new vigor.*

Taking advantage of the general excitement, Josephus called upon all to join in a new attack upon the enemy. "Now is the time to begin to fight in earnest," he cried, "when no further hope of deliverance is left. Let us choose glory rather than life, and perform some noble act which

* We cannot but contrast the wavering conduct of Josephus in such a critical moment in the history of the place which he was defending against the enemies of his country with that of the brave Vanderwerf, the burgomaster of Leyden, when that city was suffering the horrors of a siege by the armies of the popish king of Spain. Murmurs arose among the starving population at the persistence of the authorities in maintaining the siege. A party of malcontents followed the burgomaster to the public square. "What would you, my friends?" he cried. "I have made an oath to hold this city, and may God give me strength to keep my oath! My own fate is indifferent to me; not so that of the city entrusted to my care. Take my body to appease your hunger, but expect no surrender so long as I remain alive."

will be remembered by posterity." No sooner said than done. A fierce sally was made; the enemy's advance was driven in, and the Roman camp itself violently attacked. The wicker coverings were torn to pieces and set on fire. And this was repeated day after day, so that the Romans were kept in a perpetual alarm. Vespasian felt that his heavy-armed soldiers were no match for these swift birds of war; so he ordered forward his Arabian archers and Syrian slingers to harass them more effectually. The engines of war also kept up a continual play of great stones and javelins, which thundered against the walls and battlements and greatly distressed their defenders. Yet the frequent and damaging attacks upon their camp made the Romans feel almost as if they were besieged in turn.



BATTERING-RAM.

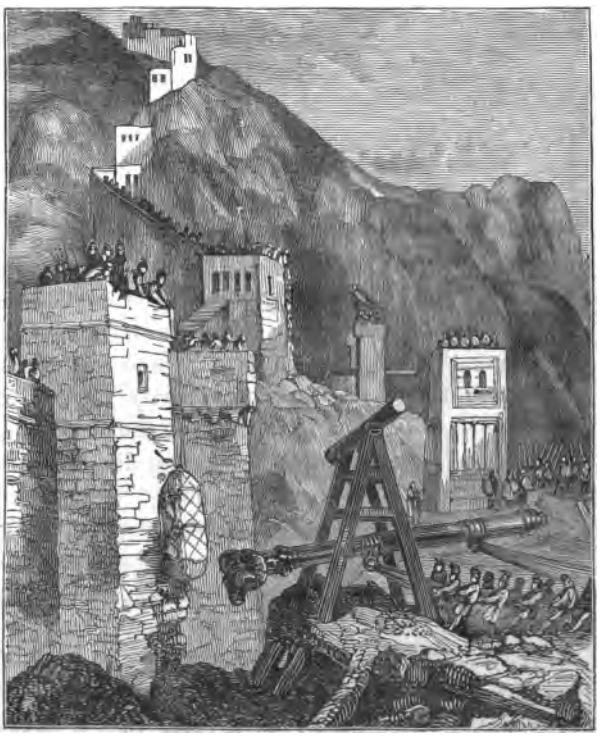
At length Vespasian's arrangements were so far completed that he could plant that formidable instrument, the battering-ram, directly against the walls. This was a long and heavy beam, like the mast of a ship, sometimes eighty, or even a hundred and twenty, feet long. It was slung by ropes about

the middle and hung from heavy framework, so that it could swing freely back and forth lengthwise. A strong and thick cap of iron, shaped like the head of a ram, was fastened firmly upon the end toward the wall. A multitude of men drew it far back by ropes fastened to the other end, or sometimes by taking hold directly upon the beam, and then hurled it forward with all their might, so that the iron head struck the wall with nearly the force of the cannon-balls which armies now use in place of the ram.

No wall or tower could resist the ponderous blows of this huge piece of artillery if it were allowed to keep up its battering. The first stroke made the wall of Jotopata tremble, and the whole city was filled with consternation and clamor, as if it was already in the hands of the enemy. At the same time Vespasian pushed his other engines and his archers closer to the wall, and made it doubly difficult for the garrison to hold their places and carry on the defence.

But the resources of Josephus were not yet exhausted. Just as at the present day every new or improved method of attack leads to corresponding improvements in methods of defence, just as the increase in the size of cannon leads to new modes of arming ships and forts, so the introduction of the battering-ram led to new modes of protecting walls against its blows. Andrew Jackson used cotton-bales for breastworks in the defence of New

Orleans in 1812; and excellent defences they were. In a somewhat similar manner, Josephus caused large sacks to be filled with chaff and let



SIEGE OPERATIONS.

down directly in front of the ram. He would doubtless have used cotton-bales if they had been within his reach.

Thus the Romans, wherever they directed the formidable ram, found the chaff-bales in their way. At length they devised a plan to get rid of them. They fastened scythes on long poles, and, reaching out, they cut the ropes by which the bales were suspended. Again the walls, now fully exposed to the ram, quivered under its ponderous blows, especially those parts which had been but newly built. The Jews then renewed their sudden sallies from the gates. They rushed out, torches in hand, from three different directions, and set fire to the works of the Romans. The timbers and wickerwork were dry; bitumen and pitch had been used as cement; these combustible materials burned with such fury that nothing could be done to save them. Even the mound itself, though partly formed of earth and stones, was licked up by the devouring element. In one hour what had cost the Romans many days of labor was consumed.

At some time during the disastrous working of the ram a daring deed was performed by one of the garrison, a Galilean, Eleazar by name. Standing on the wall immediately above the ram, he took up a huge stone, and at the moment when the head of the formidable weapon touched the wall he let fall the stone. It came with such force that it broke the head of the ram completely from the beam. Eleazar followed, leaping from the wall and in the midst of the astonished soldiery, snatched up the head of the ram and bore it away as a prize. A

multitude of darts were hurled at him in his retreat; five times was he wounded, but he managed to regain the wall, prize in hand. There, after showing himself boldly to the whole army, he sank down and died, still clinging to the head of the ram.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CAPTURE OF JOTOPATA.

NOTWITHSTANDING the frequent interruptions occasioned by the fierce onsets of the Jews, the besiegers made steady progress in their work. The damages were repaired and the attacks were renewed. If the engines were crippled in the morning, in the evening they would be in full operation again upon the same part of the wall.

Great excitement and consternation were caused in the Roman camp when a spent javelin from the wall struck the general, Vespasian, in the foot. The wound was painful, though not dangerous, but the report spread like wild-fire that the general was wounded—how badly was not known. The great body of the soldiers left off the siege and came running to the spot. The general's son, Titus, came with the rest, and for a time the confusion was universal. But Vespasian, making light of the accident, showed himself to the whole army and cheered them on to renew the battle. The desire of avenging their general's wound now stirred the soldiers to still greater effort and dar-

ing. With loud outcries they rushed back to the city-walls.

The struggle now raged with increased violence. The missiles flew thicker and thicker. Great numbers of the garrison were slain, but others pressed forward to occupy their places, hurling darts, stones and fiery arrows against the besiegers and their works. The attack was kept up during the night. The light of these burning weapons made the Jews upon the wall stand out clearly to view, and gave their enemies decidedly the advantage in aiming their darts and arrows. The great stones hurled by catapults flew like cannon-balls, mowing down several at a blow. One man's head was said to have been carried nearly half a mile from his body by one of these tremendous missiles. Pinnacles and corners of the walls came down with a crash under their blows. The air was filled with the terrible hissing and booming of weapons, the thunder of the battering-ram, the groans of the dying and the lamentations of their wives and children. The encircling hills echoed back the horrid clamor. The walls were bespattered with gore. The bodies of the Jewish soldiers were piled so high that the wall could be reached by climbing over them. No element of terror was wanting to this fearful night.

Toward morning the wall began to give way; repeated strokes of the ram had opened a breach, and the Roman army prepared to enter the city.

But behind the breach rough bulwarks had been hastily reared by the indefatigable garrison, and a new siege was necessary to open the path to the army. Vespasian drew up his soldiers in complete battle-array for this last movement. Dismounting a body of horsemen, he placed them in full armor, arranged in three ranks, at the head of the attacking column; each man was furnished with a pole to aid him in climbing. Behind these were placed the flower of the army, and still behind these the remainder of the cavalry occupied all the surrounding heights, to cut off any who might attempt to escape.

Vespasian now felt sure of his prey. But it was yet to cost him an immense outlay of pains and blood, for the garrison was never more desperate, and yet never more cool or self-possessed, than now. Josephus placed the old men and the worn-out soldiers upon the sounder part of the wall, where the attack could be more easily repelled, and took for the defence of the breach the strongest and best of the garrison. Not shrinking from danger himself, he led the defending column, taking his place as one of the first rank of six.

He cautioned the men not to be frightened at the terrific shouts of the Roman legions, and to avoid the flight of darts and arrows with which the enemy was accustomed to begin his assault, by getting down on their knees and covering their faces with their shields, and waiting until the

archers had emptied their quivers. They should lie motionless until the Romans had actually planted their ladders against the walls, and then should leap out suddenly and each one do his best in a hand-to-hand conflict.

Josephus held out no hope of success. "The object," he said, "is not to defend the city, but to take revenge, in advance, of the enemy, who will finally destroy it. Set before your eyes the slaughter of your old men, of your wives and children, which is sure to come, and pour out your fury beforehand upon the enemy, the authors of these calamities." This was certainly not Christian advice, but it is not wonderful that in the tempest of fierce passion now sweeping over Palestine, and in a war of unusual cruelty and bitterness, men should resolve to sell their lives as dearly as possible.

But the remaining population of the city, chiefly the women and children, became aware of the near approach of their cruel fate. They saw the movements of the hostile army; they beheld the walls cast down and the whole surrounding country blazing with drawn swords and arrows placed upon the strings of the Arabian bowmen; and, struck with horror and consternation, they set up a wail of anguish that pierced the hearts of their defenders. Josephus, fearing the effect of these outcries upon his soldiers, had the women shut up in their houses, and commanded them to

hold their peace; then, returning to the breach, he waited for the assault.

And now the trumpets of all the legions sounded together and the whole army raised a terrible shout, while the darts and arrows flew so thick as to darken the sky. The little garrison stopped their ears and bowed down their heads, covering them with their shields, as Josephus had ordered, until the fury of this first attack was spent and the heavy-armed column advanced toward the broken part of the wall. Then they sprang to their feet and closed in with the enemy in a desperate hand-to-hand struggle. As fast as scaling-ladders were planted they hurled them down again. But new men and new ladders constantly appeared. While the garrison, exhausted with extraordinary labors, began to give way, the Romans continually poured in fresh reinforcements, and being wedged together, with shields of brass interlocked over their heads, they formed an irresistible phalanx, which gradually worked its way onward, and at length gained footing inside the breach upon the heap of rubbish formed by the fallen wall and the hastily-reared breastwork within.

And now, says Josephus, necessity, irritated by despair, suggested in this critical moment a new and direful weapon of defence. An immense quantity of scalding-hot oil was hastily prepared, and brought in the hissing vessels directly to the walls, and poured down upon the heads of the Roman

soldiers beneath. The effect was tremendous. Clad in heavy and close-fitting armor, it was simply impossible for the scalded soldiers to get rid of the fiery liquid, which flowed easily over their entire bodies, blistering them from head to foot. They fell down and rolled over and over in uncontrollable agony, and for a time delayed the attack, hindering those who were behind and unharmed.

Still, the iron discipline of the Roman army prevailed over the terror and disorder produced by the scalding oil. The supply of that new weapon was soon exhausted. The empty caldrons were thrown down after the oil. The ranks of the assailants were closed up, and they once more crowded up toward the wall, forming bridges of planks over the intervening ditches and chasms. One more device was tried with effect by the besieged: they procured a slippery substance, made from a plant called fenugreek,* which they poured boiling hot upon the plank bridges of the Romans, making it impossible for the soldiers to maintain their footing. Again and again they slipped and fell, while those coming up to take their places were equally unable to stand or to advance. Thus exposed to the Jews, they were sorely galled, and many were slain by darts from the walls.

* A leguminous plant growing in Southern Europe, the stalk of which was used for hay, and the bean, three or four inches long, for food. The seeds are mucilaginous, and would therefore give a slippery extract.

In the midst of these furious struggles the day came to a close. Vespasian was constrained to call off his wearied and baffled soldiers with many killed and wounded and their work unaccomplished. The Jews had lost, according to Josephus, but six killed outright and three or four hundred wounded.

Vespasian found his soldiers exasperated rather than disheartened by this repulse. They needed no promptings or exhortations, but were ready for anything which the general might propose. Instead, however, of ordering a new assault, he directed them to raise the mound still higher, and to build upon it three new towers, each fifty feet in height. In order to guard them completely against that favorite and effective weapon of their enemy, fire, as well as to give them firmness and solidity, he completely encased them in plates of iron. In these formidable towers he placed bowmen and slingers, as well as the lighter class of engines for hurling darts and stones.

The advantage was now completely with the besiegers. From their elevated positions they could look down into the city, and could hurl their missiles with terrible force upon the defenders of the walls, while the weapons thrown back by the Jews could make little impression upon those so high above themselves. They were compelled, in fact, to abandon the walls and to confine themselves to sallies from the gates, in which they lost numbers every day.

Meantime, events of evil omen for the besieged city were occurring in the immediate neighborhood. A village named Japha, not far from Jotopata, had been fortified with a double wall. A detachment from the army that was besieging Jotopata was, under the command of Trajan, sent to capture it. But this he found no easy task, until the soldiers, having boldly ventured out and offered battle to the Roman forces, were beaten and driven back in confusion to the walls. Entering the outer gates in their hasty retreat, they were unable to shut out the Romans, who were close behind them. The defenders of the inner wall in alarm closed the gates against their own friends, for fear of admitting their terrible enemies also. Thus the defeated Jews found themselves cooped up between two walls in the presence of the victorious Romans; and though they beat upon the gates and clamored desperately for admission, and even called on their friends by name, they were left to their fate by what seemed to be a cruel act of treachery. Beaten, helpless, betrayed, they fell before the swords of their enemies, or even perished by their own or each other's hands, to the number of twelve thousand. Soon afterward the city was taken by assault, and the number of the slain was increased to fifteen thousand. Over two thousand of the inhabitants besides were taken captive.

The Samaritans, too, suffered a terrible blow at this time. Their sympathy with the Jews was but

slight, and the foreign rulers of Palestine had generally found them orderly and faithful while other parts of the country were disturbed with sedition. But now the Samaritans shared the prevailing uneasiness and desire to get rid of the Roman yoke. A large body of them had gathered together and taken position on their sacred mount, Gerizim, apparently without any definite purpose. Cerealis, a Roman lieutenant, was sent with about eight thousand men to watch their movements and disperse them. He soon had them completely in his power, and then offered to let them all go if they would surrender and give up their arms without striking a blow. When they refused he fell upon them with his army and slew them every one, being eleven thousand six hundred in all. This was on the 27th of June, A. D. 67.

And now the end of Jotopata too was come. For forty-seven days this little city, with its handful of brave defenders, had defied the power of the mistress of the world, Great generals, future emperors of Rome, were baffled by the amazing spirit and the marvelous devices of these half-starved, brave men. Even yet, if it had not been for the treason of one of their number, there remained a possibility of prolonging the siege, although in their worn-out condition they must doubtless soon succumb to the iron-clad towers and the unexhausted resources of the besiegers.

A deserter bore to Vespasian the news of the

extremely weakened condition of the defenders of the town. They were completely exhausted with incessant fighting and watching. Even those set to watch could not pretend to keep awake, but just before morning, when they supposed no attack was likely to be made, they would allow themselves to fall asleep. That was the time in which this renegade recommended Vespasian cautiously to make his assault.

At first, Vespasian suspected the deserter. He had learned to fear this fiery Jewish garrison, and he did not know but that some trick was preparing, of which this deserter was one of the agents, by which his army was to be entrapped. Heretofore, the Romans had been unable, even by tortures, to extract any information about the city from the captives who had fallen into their hands. However, Vespasian gave orders to prepare the army for a night-assault, feeling tolerably certain that the condition of the defence must be very much as represented by the deserter.

Providence seemed to favor this movement of the Romans. A heavy mist had arisen and enveloped the city at this early hour. The advance of the Roman column could neither be seen nor heard. Titus, the son of the general, was the first to scale the wall. The sentinels, as had been foretold, were nearly all asleep, and were slain without creating any disturbance. The others, who roused up, could see nothing on account of

the mist. Placidus, who had before vainly tried to capture the city, with Cerealis, was quickly over the wall, the whole of which was in the hands of the Romans before a general alarm could be sounded. The slaughter had actually begun before the Jews knew that their city had been captured.

The obstinacy of the defence had embittered the conquerors. They seized upon the helpless city with the fierceness and rage of a hungry wild beast pouncing upon his victim. They spared none, they pitied none. The soldiers of the garrison and the people generally attempted a feeble defence. But, crowded in the narrow streets and driven to the edge of the precipice which encircled the unfortified parts of the city, they fell before the Romans in heaps, or even killed themselves in great numbers rather than fall into the hands of the enemy. A few of the watch had fled, when the Romans first entered the city, to one of the towers on the wall, and there they maintained themselves for a time; but at last, overpowered by numbers, they calmly offered their necks to the sword. All resistance was speedily ended. The Romans might have boasted that the siege which had cost them so dear was concluded without loss on their side, had it not been for one Antonius, a centurion, who lost his life through treachery. A number of fugitives had taken refuge in a cavern, where they were discovered by Antonius. They offered to surrender if the centurion would promise them

their lives, and would reach to them his right hand for security. As he trustingly extended his arm one of the fugitives drove a spear into his loins and killed him instantly.

All day was spent by the Romans in indiscriminate bloodshed. The city was ransacked for victims from end to end. But Josephus, whom the Roman general was especially anxious to secure, had nowhere been discovered. Did his body lie among the heaps of undistinguished dead? Had he somehow escaped in the general slaughter? Was he hidden in some cunning retreat which had so far baffled the keen search of the Romans, ever thirsty for more victims and more blood? The piles of the dead were searched in vain. It must be that Josephus was still alive.

The second day came. And now, having slain or captured all who could be found above ground, the soldiers searched among the caverns that abounded in the rocky soil of the city, and dragged out multitudes of fugitives to be added to the list of the victims. A total of forty thousand were slain, including the entire losses during the siege and the butchery at the close, while the captives saved alive numbered but twelve hundred women and children. Vespasian gave orders that the city should be utterly destroyed and the fortifications razed to the ground.

Thus fell the brave little city whose defence is among the most gallant on record in all the dark

annals of war, helping to put the Jewish name among the very highest for bravery and endurance under discouragement and disaster, as the wonderful exploits of the Maccabees had gained for it a brilliant reputation for military genius in the open field.

At length the hiding-place of Josephus was discovered to the Romans. Soon after the entrance of the Romans he had made good his escape into a well-like cavity, from which a large den opened horizontally and formed a refuge totally invisible from the ground above. Here he found forty of the leading citizens concealed, with provisions sufficient for several days. In the day-time Josephus remained hid, but at night he came out in the hope of finding some unguarded place by which he might escape from the city. But the Roman guards were too numerous and too vigilant, and Josephus returned each time to the subterranean den.

On the third day a woman who had been with the company was captured by the Romans, and through her they made the important discovery of the hiding-place of Josephus. At once Vespasian sent two tribunes to the cavern with an urgent message to Josephus, offering him every security for his life if he would only surrender. At first he refused, naturally distrusting offers of mercy from foes whom he had done so much to exasperate, and who were always cruel to the con-

quered. Vespasian, however, was in earnest, and when the two tribunes came back unsuccessful he added a third tribune, one Nicanor, an old acquaintance of Josephus, and sent them back upon the same errand.

Nicanor made himself known to Josephus, and used every argument to induce him to surrender rather than allow himself to be slain like the rest. He assured him that the hostility of the Romans was lost in admiration for his valiant behavior; that Vespasian was anxious to preserve a man of such distinguished courage; and that, for himself, he would not be a party to so vile an act as to pretend friendship in order to betray Josephus to the hands of his enemies.

The Jewish general not responding promptly, the soldiers who waited at the mouth of the well became impatient and prepared to throw down a heap of burning materials, such as would have suffocated those in the cavern or compelled them to come out and surrender. The tribunes, however, knowing their general's wishes, restrained the soldiers, while Nicanor renewed his persuasions.

To Josephus this was doubtless a moment of intense excitement, in which all he had seen and suffered during the siege seemed to come back and pass as in a flash through his fevered mind. He speaks of tremendous images he had lately seen in his dreams, and says he was in a kind of ecstasy; he seemed to have been inspired, for he beheld the

fulfillment of his own predictions in the calamities of his countrymen. Uttering a prayer, and protesting to God that he did not go over to the Romans as a deserter from the Jews, but solely as fulfilling the divine will, he resolved to surrender to Nicanor.

All this must have taken but a moment, while Nicanor kept back the eager soldiers from their prey. But when it was understood in the cavern that Josephus was about to put himself in the hands of the Romans, there was a general commotion, and the whole body of refugees came around him to expostulate with him, and even by violence to prevent him from carrying out his purpose. "What, Josephus!" they cried, "so fond of life that you are willing to become a slave? Have you so soon forgotten yourself, so soon forgotten the multitudes whom you persuaded to lose their lives for liberty? False is your reputation for manhood, false, too, your reputation for wisdom, if you can hope for mercy from those against whom you fought so zealously, or if you are willing to receive it from them, supposing them to be in earnest. The successes of the Romans have made you forget yourself. We will lend you our right hands and our swords; if you accept them and die willingly, you will die as general of the Jews; if unwillingly, then you will die as a traitor to our cause."

With that they drew their swords and presented

them menacingly to Josephus. They wished and intended if necessary to force him to join them in committing suicide rather than make terms with the Romans. With great self-possession, and with the coolness of a philosopher discoursing amid a circle of disciples, Josephus argued against the fanaticism which refused to listen to the offers of safety from the enemy, and which insisted on the needless and criminal act of self-murder.

But it was all to no purpose. They pressed upon the speaker from every direction. Seeing that escape was cut off, Josephus proposed that lots should be cast—that the one who drew the first lot should be slain by the one who drew the second, and so on to the last, who might choose whether to die by his own hand or to live. To this they all agreed, not doubting that Josephus would thus die with them; they thought death, if Josephus would but share it with them, sweeter than life as captives to the Romans.

However, it turned out that Josephus, with another man, was left to the last. Wishing to save his own life, and unwilling to take the life of his fellow, Josephus persuaded him to unite with himself in surrendering to the Romans.

Thus both came from the bloody cavern into the daylight. Josephus congratulated himself that he had escaped from his friends as well as from the swords of the Romans. Nicanor seized his valu-

able prize and bore him directly to Vespasian. There was a general rush to see the Jewish leader. A tumult of contrary voices arose. Those on the edge of the crowd called out for vengeance, while those who looked on the manly form of the youthful general—who was but thirty years old—were touched at the change of his fortunes. Not a Roman officer, however enraged at his resistance, but relented at the sight of the man himself. Titus, the son of the Roman commander, showed a more than Roman nobleness of character by earnestly advocating the cause of the prisoner and securing from his father the most kindly treatment of the captive.

But, after all, Josephus, with his unfailing resources, was his own best friend. As he was being led away he begged for a private interview with Vespasian. Whereupon all were ordered to withdraw but Titus and two friends. Assuming that air of dignity and sanctity which seems to have well become his form and features, Josephus declared himself to be far more than a captive; he was a messenger of great tidings sent from God to Vespasian. It was unnecessary to send Josephus as a prisoner to Nero at Rome: "Thou, O Vespasian, art Cæsar, art emperor, thou and this thy son. Bind me now still faster and keep me for thyself. For thou, O Cæsar, art not only lord over me, but over the land and the sea and all mankind. Keep me in custody, and punish me

if the event shows that I have rashly affirmed anything of God."

Vespasian was among the great generals of his time; it was evident that the hated reign of Nero was drawing to a close; his successor was almost certain to be a Roman general. Josephus had grasped the exact situation of public affairs, and, either by providential guidance or by uncommon natural shrewdness, availed himself of them to secure the favor of the ambitious general. Vespasian heard him rather coolly at first, but it was not long before he permitted himself to be fully persuaded of the sincerity of Josephus' professions, and even of the veracity of his predictions.

One of the friends who were present at this private conference wished to know why Josephus had not given the people of Jotopata the benefit of his prophetic insight; to which Josephus replied that he had predicted that the city would be taken the forty-seventh day, and that he would fall alive into the hands of the Romans. Vespasian was sufficiently interested in the prophetic powers of Josephus to make inquiries privately among the captives about these predictions. When they confirmed the statements of Josephus he gave the more credit to those which had been uttered concerning himself.

Josephus, although still kept a prisoner, was freed from his fetters and was treated with

the utmost kindness. Suits of clothes and other valuable gifts were sent to him, and Titus continued to show a lively interest in his welfare. Two years afterward the prediction was fulfilled, and Vespasian became emperor of Rome.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CONQUEST OF GALILEE COMPLETED.

On the fourth day of July, Vespasian returned with his wearied army to Ptolemais on the sea-coast. It was not very creditable to the Roman arms that a month and a half of the season had gone by with nothing to show for it but incredibly hard fighting and a single position taken from the stubborn Jews. More rapid movements now followed. From Ptolemais the Romans marched to Cæsarea, which was now in possession of the Greek portion of the inhabitants. Not only were the gates thrown open joyfully at the approach of the army, but the animosity of the people against the Jews appeared in the petition which they addressed to Vespasian, asking that Josephus might be put to death. To this the Roman general did not deign to reply.

Having learned that Joppa was the centre of an active maritime warfare, called piracy in those days, but which was largely of the nature of privateering as it is understood in our day, Vespasian undertook the capture of that port. The Roman forces entered the city unopposed, the inhabitants

for the most part taking refuge in their boats. This was well enough during calm weather, and through the night the boats lay quietly at a safe distance from the darts of the enemy.

In the morning, however, a fierce wind arose, well known to sailors as *the black north wind*, against which the harbor furnished no protection. The multitudes of vessels were dashed against each other or hurled against the sea-wall and the rocky coast. On shore the Roman soldiers stood waiting to kill those who escaped drowning; many preferred to run their boats out into the open sea, where they were soon swamped by the violence of the wind. Others, using their swords, perished by their own hands. Soon the shores were thickly strewn with dead bodies and the water itself reddened with blood. The Romans demolished the city and converted the citadel into a camp, where a sufficient force was kept to prevent its use as a harbor and to overawe and ravage the surrounding territory.

Twenty days were now given to the army for recruiting. These were spent, by express invitation, at Cæsarea Philippi, the capital of the dominions of Agrippa. Here there were feastings and public thanksgivings for the victories already obtained. Finding the city of Tiberias, which was part of the kingdom of Agrippa, in a state of revolt, Vespasian put his army in motion, and came to a station in sight of the city. Before making an

attack, however, he determined to treat with the inhabitants, and finally secured the surrender of the place without bloodshed. In attempting to lead his army into the city he found the gate too narrow for easy admission, whereupon he tore down the adjoining part of the wall, which was the only mark left upon it of subjection to Rome.

Vespasian now turned his attention to the neighboring city of Tarichea, near the outlet of the Sea of Galilee, which promised a stubborn resistance. This brought the tide of war around the shores of the once peaceful and beautiful Sea of Galilee. Where Jesus walked and taught; where he calmed the storm and walked over the waves; where he cast out devils and healed all manner of sickness; where his disciples pursued their quiet labors as fishermen; and where, after his resurrection, he satisfied his disciples of the reality of that wonderful event,—there all the horrors of that most cruel and desperate of struggles, the Jewish war, were about to be enacted.

Well was it that Christ's mission had been completed a generation ago, for there would have been no time or chance to utter messages of peace and love amid the shock of arms and the outbreak and the punishment of a passionate rebellion. Christ's mission had been rejected by the Jews; the Roman power had been invoked to put him to death. The same spirit of unbelief and pride was now bringing the whole crushing weight of the Roman

power upon their own heads, and thus avenging the crime of Calvary. It is melancholy yet instructive to notice how the footprints of the divine Messenger of mercy around the shores of the Galilean Sea and all over Palestine were washed out in the blood of the race that rejected him.

Tarichea—so called, probably, from the drying and salting of fish here carried on—lay on the south-west coast of the lake, about four miles below Tiberias. In situation it resembled Tiberias, being enclosed between a mountain on one side and the sea on the other. On the land side it was fortified, but the inhabitants relied chiefly upon their boats, of which they had prepared a great multitude, some of them fitted up for war.

The Roman soldiers began by building a wall around their camp. This work was quickly interrupted by the Jews, who made a vigorous sally, drove off the workmen, pulled the fortification to pieces and retired without loss within the walls of the city. Then, taking to their boats, they formed in line of battle and kept up an exchange of missiles with the enemy on shore.

Very differently did it fare with a large body of Galileans—probably not citizens of Tarichea—who, Vespasian heard, were drawn up on the plain not far from the city. Charging upon these with his horsemen, after a brief resistance he put them to flight. Many of them were slain, but the greater number escaped and made their way into Tarichea.

A violent dispute arose upon their entrance. The citizens, as a whole, were opposed to fighting the invincible Romans, and thus ensuring, without any good result, the destruction of their property and the loss of their lives. But the outsiders, who had taken refuge in the city, and who had already abandoned their homes to the enemy, insisted on keeping up the struggle. Between the two parties a great clamor arose, which was even heard by the enemy.

Titus, who was in command of the cavalry which had just gained the victory, understood the meaning of the clamor. Calling out to his troops to follow him, that "now was their opportunity," he leaped upon his horse and rode in all haste to the shore of the lake, dashed into the water, and, followed by his men, made his entrance by this totally unexpected way into the city. The walls, being no longer of any use, were abandoned by the garrison. All sought safety in flight; but, as usual when Romans were pursuers, flight brought no greater safety than armed resistance. The foreigners were put to death without mercy. Many of the citizens also were sacrificed, although they took no part in the defence. After a time, however, the slaughter ceased, and the bulk of the inhabitants were spared.

But those who had taken refuge in boats upon the sea were reserved for a worse fate. Hastily the Romans got together a fleet of boats, which they

filled with soldiers, while they occupied every landing-place, every creek and harbor, with armed men. Then they rowed out to meet the light fishing-barks of the Galileans. The struggle which followed was too unequal to be called a fight. The arms of the Romans far outreached those of the Galileans, as cannon would carry farther than pistols; their boats were heavier, their numbers were greater. The Jews hurled stones, which rattled harmlessly on the heavy armor of the enemy, or, falling far short, splashed in the water; the Romans shot darts which pierced to the bone. When the hostile vessels came in contact the Jews were slain with long spears from the high banks of the Roman boats, or their boats were boarded and they put to the sword; their lighter boats were sometimes crushed and swamped and the crews thrown into the lake. There they were speedily drowned, or if they attempted to swim their heads were marks for Roman arrows; if they, in desperation, tried to save their lives by clinging to the enemy's boats, their heads or their hands were speedily lopped off; if they fled from the perils of the waters and sought the shore, they found the cruel enemy ready at every point to cut them down in the act of landing.

According to Josephus, not one of those who betook themselves to the boats escaped. The slaughter was so great that the waters of the lake were dyed with blood and the shores corrupted

with the swollen corpses. The air was loaded with a horrible stench, so that the Romans themselves were sick of the effects of their own barbarities. Altogether, six thousand perished in front of the city.

But worse was yet to come—worse and more disgraceful, if that were possible, to the Roman name. About forty thousand strangers had been made captives in the surrender of the city. Many of the strangers had already been slain in the first onset upon the place, but this great number still remained to be disposed of. Twelve hundred of the aged and helpless were slain in cold blood under the express direction of Vespasian. Six thousand of the most able-bodied were sent to work in the ditch which Nero was trying to dig across the Isthmus of Corinth, and the whole remainder, over thirty thousand in number, were sold as slaves. It is reckoned as some palliation of this piece of cruelty and treachery that the victims were of that incorrigible type which was always ready for sedition and robberies, and which gave a bad name to the whole district of Galilee. But, says Milman, "had they been devils it could not excuse the base treachery of Vespasian."

It was, in truth, a terrible warning to the insurgents, and it had the effect of bringing most of the fortified places in Galilee at once to terms. Still, three strong places held out against the victors—Gamala, on the eastern shore of the lake, opposite

the ill-fated Tarichea; Giscala, ten miles north-west of the lake, known already as the home of that robber chief John who hindered the earlier movements of Josephus against the Romans; and Itabyrium, on the summit of Mount Tabor, one of the places fortified by Josephus. It would seem as if not one of these places could hope to make a successful resistance to the all-conquering invaders, who had no opposition to meet in the open field, and who could concentrate their immense energies and resources successively upon each of the places that persisted in holding out. It was the prompting of that fervent, and even fanatical, patriotism that would prefer death and the utter ruin of their country to slavery.

Gamala, to the northward, was the first object of Vespasian's attack. Naturally, it was even more difficult of access than Jotopata. Its name was derived from the word for "camel," the ledge on which it was built resembling the awkward hump of that animal. Rising suddenly, it formed a narrow ridge in the middle, the sloping sides of which ended in precipices. In one direction only could it be reached, where the ridge or tongue of land joined to the mountain which rose behind and north of it. There also a deep ditch had been dug to cut off all approach. The crag came abruptly to an end on the south; here was an elevation which served as a natural citadel, whose sides went sheer down to a tremendous depth. The

houses were built very close together, and on the sharp ridge the city seemed to hang as if about to tumble down upon itself.

This city, which was more like an eyrie for eagles than the abode of men, was assailed by the Romans. By nature wellnigh impregnable, it was strengthened by walls and ditches and every means of defence which Josephus the year before could supply. The garrison, though not so numerous as that of Jotopata, was confident in the vast strength of its natural defences, and a great multitude of fugitives from the surrounding country was within the walls. It was an inestimable advantage, too, that it possessed an abundant and unfailing supply of water. For seven months already it had defied a force sent against it by Agrippa.

When Vespasian appeared he saw at a glance that a blockade of the whole place was simply impossible. He took position on the north, on the mountain of which the ridge of Gamala was a prolongation, and which rose to a greater height than the city itself. Various positions were assigned to the different Roman legions; the tenth was employed in filling up the ditches and ravines by which all approach to the city had been cut off.

The besiegers were exasperated by the treatment which Agrippa received from the garrison. He had approached the walls, and was trying to get a hearing in order to persuade the people to surrender the city and save it from destruction, when

he was struck on the elbow by a stone from a sling. His own soldiers surrounded him, and, although he was not seriously harmed, bore him away from the field. It shows the extreme bitterness and recklessness of feeling that prevailed, when an offer of kindness could be repulsed so violently, without so much as giving opportunity for hearing it.

The siege was now pressed with vigor; mounds were raised, ditches were filled up and battering-rams advanced against the northern wall. Catapults and other engines hurled stones and darts with such violence that the garrison was compelled to abandon the walls and retire into the higher parts of the city. This gave free play to the battering-rams, which soon broke large openings through the walls. With a great shout and clangor of trumpets and ringing of armor the soldiers clambered hastily over the ruins, nothing doubting that the city was now theirs.

But they were met by such a determined and desperate resistance within that their work seemed only begun. Pressing their way into the steep and narrow parts of the city, the Romans were caught as in a trap. They could make no advance whatever against those who occupied the higher ground, while the masses of their own men kept pressing upon them from behind. Thus hemmed and crowded in the narrow streets, they broke into the houses alongside, and these by and by were packed so full of heavily-armed men that

they began to give way. When one house fell the ruins would fall down the hillside, and, tumbling against the next house, would bring that down with a crash also. Thus, house would follow house in a general overthrow, as if the ridge was being shaken by an earthquake.

Terrible and unexpected indeed was this disaster to the Romans. Multitudes were crushed in the ruins; multitudes were dreadfully maimed, and great numbers were choked by the dust, from which they could not escape. The people of Gamala were as if inspired by what they regarded as a direct divine interposition in their favor. Regardless of danger from the falling ruins, they assailed the Romans upon the crumbling housetops. The heaps of rubbish afforded them weapons, or from the bodies of the crushed and dead of the enemy they supplied themselves with arms and finished the work of slaughter which the overthrow of the buildings had begun. Not a few Romans, wounded, blinded by dust and ignorant of the way out, rather than fall by the hands of the garrison, slew themselves.

Vespasian himself was carried by his zeal into the very centre of the struggle and of the catastrophe. He only escaped by great coolness and presence of mind. Ordering the soldiers around him to lock their brass shields over their heads and form a testudo, he was able to ward off the stones and darts of the enemy, and gradually to

withdraw, without turning his back, beyond the walls of the city. The Roman loss was large, but we do not know any particulars except the much-deplored death of a brave Roman officer, a centurion named Ebritius, who had greatly distinguished himself in the war.

The besiegers were discouraged by this extraordinary repulse. Vespasian found it necessary to cheer them and explain to them the causes of their failure, and to point out how, in future, they might repair their mistakes. They had slain already such multitudes of the Jews that they should not count it hard if they too must sometimes bear a share of the slaughter.

For a time the garrison was correspondingly elated. But the great defect in this whole Jewish war, after the leader Josephus was captured, was the absence of a disciplined army in the field to draw off and distract the attention of the besiegers, and to take advantage of such severe repulses as had been inflicted by the garrison of Gamala. Now the only effect of success was to raise the spirits of the besieged, and afterward to bring down a far worse fate upon their heads and a more complete destruction to their city. If the people had been united, and the authorities at Jerusalem had been in a condition to take a comprehensive view of the situation and to consider the wants of the country as a whole, instead of settling the question of supremacy among contending

factions at home, the Romans might have found Palestine as stubborn and unconquerable as Germany. As it was, they found it among the severest trials of their arms to conquer it.

The shattered walls were repaired and the whole line of fortifications was vigilantly guarded, and the baffled besiegers began their siege-works anew. When a rumor went through the city that they were ready for a second assault, many fled through sewers and underground passages which led to paths down the cliff unknown to the enemy. The garrison, however, held its ground, but provisions were growing scanty and the people who remained were pining away with famine.

Meantime, another of the three rebellious cities, Itabyrium, on Mount Tabor, had been captured by Titus. Only six hundred horse had been despatched upon this errand under Placidus. Placidus, perceiving the strength of the position, invited the garrison out to treat with him. The garrison, thinking so small a number would fall an easy prey, came out on pretence of treating, but really with the intention of surprising Placidus. He was also treacherously intending to fall upon the defenders, and when they appeared and began the attack, he, pretending flight, drew them out, in some disorder, into the open plain, where his horses could manœuvre freely. Then, suddenly wheeling round, he routed them with dreadful slaughter and cut off all retreat to the mountain.

The fugitives made their way to Jerusalem. The inhabitants, seeing their garrison thus utterly destroyed, and being in want of water, for which they depended upon cisterns, without further resistance surrendered that strong place to the Romans.

The overthrow of Gamala, which soon followed, was brought about chiefly by the daring of two soldiers of the fifteenth legion of the Roman army. They determined to attempt the undermining of the foundations of one of the highest towers in the wall. They crept close to the wall by night, and worked so effectively that by the morning-watch they had gotten completely under it. Then, striking away five of the largest stones, they ran for their lives. With a great crash the whole tower came down, bringing the guards with it. All the sentinels on the wall ran for their lives. The consternation was general throughout the city. One of the two Galilean leaders was slain by the Romans near the fallen tower. The other, Chares, who was lying seriously ill, died in the midst of the tumult.

But the Romans, rendered cautious by disaster, remained outside the walls for some days, until Titus, having returned from the victory at Tabor, with two hundred horse and a number of infantry entered the city without serious opposition. After a short struggle, the bulk of the garrison and many of the citizens and their families betook themselves to the elevated and almost inaccessible

citadel on the southern crag. As the Romans attempted to follow, they were easily beaten back by volleys of stones and darts. Just then, however, a violent storm arose, blowing in the faces of the Jews, blinding them and breaking the force of their missiles, disabling them from the defence and favoring the Romans, who received its force on their backs. Thus the crag was scaled and the place was captured. Josephus regards the storm as a providence exercised in behalf of the Romans. One can with difficulty see how they could have prevailed over the garrison without it.

The usual slaughter and suicides followed. The steep crags and precipices offered facilities for self-destruction which were abundantly used even by whole families. Five thousand bodies of those who had cast themselves headlong from the rocks were found. The Roman swords themselves had not been so busy; their victims reached but four thousand. Two women who had successfully concealed themselves were the only persons who escaped the massacre. Even infants had been flung from the rocks by the Romans. Thus fell the lofty Gamala, on the 23d of September, A. D. 67.

Giscala, the third of these fortified places, yet remained. As in other cases, it was not the wish of the population to resist, but the famous John, opponent of Josephus, with his robber band, controlled the place, and insisted on maintaining the defence. Titus, who was charged with the attack,

probably understood the divided sentiment of the city, and before proceeding to hostilities sent offers for capitulation. John occupied the walls with his soldiers, and prevented the people from hearing the terms offered by Titus. Professing, however, to accept the terms for himself and his garrison, he asked, as that day was the sabbath, that the matter be deferred out of regard to the commandment.

With remarkable courtesy, Titus not only granted this delay, but withdrew some distance from the place. Perhaps he distrusted the robber chief, and preferred to be out of the reach of a sudden attack. It is evident that John had not the slightest intention to put himself in the hands of the Romans. Whether he had plotted a sudden surprise of Titus and his detachment, and, when he found them entirely withdrawn from the neighborhood, had changed his plan, cannot be known. We know that on the Friday night, when he saw that the Roman guards were no longer at their posts, he seized the opportunity to abandon the city and to fly with his armed followers to Jerusalem.

A great multitude of fugitives, women and children, unwisely attempted to accompany him in his hurried flight of more than a hundred miles. And melancholy indeed was their fate. For about two miles they managed to keep up with the retreating army, but then their strength began to fail, and they were abandoned one after another by husbands and fathers, while entreating vainly for help and

lamenting their cruel destiny. Some lost their way, and the sabbath sun arose on a heartrending spectacle of worn-out and despairing fugitives, some nearer, some farther from the retreating army, but none able to keep up with its rapid flight.

Titus entered the city the next day through the gates opened by the willing people. His army, despatched in pursuit of John, unable to overtake him, avenged themselves for his escape by an indiscriminate and brutal assault upon the scattered and defenceless fugitives, of whom no less than six thousand were slain, and less than half as many brought back to be sold as slaves. Dissatisfied as Titus was with the escape of John through his own leniency or over-caution, he obliged his army to be content with the blood already shed outside of the city-walls. Within, no one was molested. Even the requests of the loyal portion of the population, who wished the rebelliously-inclined of their fellow-citizens to be punished, were rejected by Titus. He garrisoned the city and tore down a small portion of the wall, simply as a token of its subjugation.

Thus was captured every opposing position in Galilee, and that whole turbulent region was reduced to submission. Samaria too had been sufficiently punished for the small part which it had taken in the Jewish rebellion, and was now at peace. No hostile territory now lay between the victorious Romans and the city of Jerusalem, that burning centre of all the passions and impulses

which stirred the national heart. Vespasian, after some minor military movements, returned to Cæsarea, followed by an immense multitude of those from all quarters who desired to live under the immediate protection of the Roman arms.

CHAPTER XXX.

INTERNAL CONDITION OF JERUSALEM.

WHEN Jotopata fell not a man escaped to tell the story. A vague rumor of disaster floated, as if through the air, to Jerusalem, followed afterward by more definite but incorrect accounts of the calamity. It was reported that Josephus himself was among the fallen. This was regarded as a national loss, and besides the multiplied laments for individual friends, which were heard in nearly every family, a public mourning for Josephus was ordered, which lasted thirty days, musicians being hired to perform burial-chants. But the tune was changed when the truth came out that their trusted general was alive and well in the hands of Vespasian, and enjoying the favor of the Romans. Sorrow gave place to indignation. He was called dastard, traitor and apostate. A fierce desire to punish the renegade even sharpened their wish and hope to repel the Roman invasion.

In decided contrast with that of Josephus was the conduct of John of Giscala. Hearing of his approach with the escaped garrison of his native town, the multitudes of Jerusalem poured out of

the city-walls to honor his faithfulness and to receive tidings of the disasters in Galilee. Heated, exhausted; breathless with the hasty flight from their terrible enemies, he put the best face possible on the whole condition of things. They had not been compelled to fly as beaten, but had simply retired to Jerusalem as a better military position. After all, Giscala and similar positions in Galilee were weak and of small account, and if the Roman army had experienced such immense difficulty, and had worn out their great engines, in capturing these insignificant places, how could they by any possibility capture so strong a place as Jerusalem, even if they had wings to help them over the walls?

Thus John, who was a ready talker, easily wrought up the spirits of the younger and more hopeful part of the population. But, though he spoke lightly of the calamities which had befallen the Galileans, yet when the horrible fate of the fugitives who had preposterously attempted to accompany him from Giscala to Jerusalem was made known, the older people comprehended the whole situation, and saw that John and his fatigued followers had fled from nothing else but fear of the Romans, and that before very long the sufferings and overthrow of the Galileans must be repeated in the fortunes of their own city.

These two contrary opinions indicated the divided sentiment which prevailed in Jerusalem.

From this time two hostile factions began to be clearly developed among the people. Their dissensions form a large part of the history of the siege. It was war within war, calamities of the worst sort coming upon them from without, doubled by the calamities engendered through strife amongst themselves. Those who preferred peace were at war with those who desired war. Families were divided and embittered in hopeless dissension; friends were estranged from friends; parties were formed, and the lines were drawn with such sternness as to blot out all other distinctions. The youth were unanimous for war; older persons foresaw the calamities and the more than doubtful result which it would bring. Ruffians who had been robbing and devastating the surrounding country, and making the Jews in the rural districts almost anxious for the success of the Roman arms, flocked into Jerusalem, swelled the numbers of the war-party, formed a violent and dangerous element in the population, and devoured the stock of provisions without adding to the efficiency of the defence. These dangerous individuals became objects of universal dread when banded together. Their former lawless practices were renewed in the streets of the city and in broad daylight. Leading citizens were the victims of their outrages. They seized upon the person of Antipas, whose family was traced back to the line of the kings, and who held the office of treas-

urer of the city. Other persons of royal lineage were seized and imprisoned. The mass of the people looked on in dumb terror, as the Athenians had done under the secret outrages of the Thirty Tyrants. Like them, the Jewish tyrants had their eleven executioners, hired ruffians who put their noble prisoners to death upon the plea that they had been detected in a conspiracy with the Romans. The robbers gloried in this act, as if they had proved themselves the saviors and benefactors of the city.

Dean Milman, in his *History of the Jews*, expresses the wish that we might have heard in regard to these transactions from some one less evidently partial than Josephus. He shows too plainly that his sympathies are wholly with the peace-party in Jerusalem. The character and the acts of those who insisted upon carrying on the war are painted in the worst possible colors. They not only have the rabble and the dangerous elements with them, but the leaders themselves are the worst of men, while their highly respectable opponents are subjected to the greatest outrages upon bare suspicion or empty pretext. The war-party perished, and left no one to write its records or to argue its cause.

Yet the conduct of this war-party, as described by Josephus, agrees well with what we know of its elements and its origin. It was born of a fierce and blind fanaticism. It arose from a false

view of the calling and mission of the nation, as exclusively chosen of God and not to be subjected to a heathen yoke. That divine purpose had been accomplished, but these Zealots knew it not. God had sent the promised Messiah. He had fulfilled the gracious designs for which he had established and perpetuated the Jewish people, and now those only had understood his purposes and were truly representing that people who had fled betimes from the city, and who were conveying the news of the Messiah, like Paul and the apostles, over all the known world.

The Zealots represented that class who rejected the Messiah and who clung to the old and unbelieving Judaism; who, in the blindness and hardness of their hearts, seeing, saw not, and hearing, heard not; who read the prophets and understood them not; who, by trying to keep up the exclusive life of the nation when its work was done, and by refusing to recognize in Jesus the grand conclusion and triumph of that work, and by nailing him to the cross, renewed and carried to its highest pitch the long rebellion of the Jews against their God. Possibly, the dark, very dark, lines of the picture drawn by Josephus of these leaders of the rebellion are exaggerated, but they correspond very closely to what might be expected of the wrong-headed and bitter fanatics who misconceived and tried to reverse the divine purpose in their national existence. They were the successors of Barabbas, the

robber and murderer, whom their fathers had preferred to Christ.

Emboldened by the general terror which paralyzed the people, the Zealots added blasphemy and sacrilege to their other atrocities. They invaded the sanctity of the high priesthood and broke the line of succession, setting aside the families to which it belonged, and putting some of the lowest of the people, their own ignoble creatures, in their place. Fitness in these persons for the once holy office was not thought of; they were placed there to render such services as the Zealots might require in their plots of rapine and murder.

This last act was an outrage which could not be borne in silence. Ananus, the oldest of the high priests, led the opposition. Murmurs and threats against the usurpers spread among the people. Matters began to look formidable for the robbers, but they had taken the precaution to occupy the temple, which was itself the strongest fortification in the whole country. The indignation of the people was at the highest point when they saw a coarse clown named Phanias awkwardly attempting to perform the delicate duties of the office of high priest, and making himself ridiculous by his incessant blunders. Ananus and his associates addressed the multitude with impassioned eloquence. They responded by eagerly demanding to be led against the enemy.

But the Zealots were beforehand in their move-

ments, and fell upon Ananus and the multitude while they were in the midst of their preparations. The Zealots were superior in discipline, but the people by sheer force of numbers crowded them back, and after a bloody struggle gained possession of the outer court of the temple, while the Zealots held the inner courts and the sanctuary. The scruples of Ananus prevented him from pressing forward. He dreaded to make those holy courts the scene of slaughter, and was even unwilling that the people, rendered impure by the shedding of blood, should advance beyond the Court of the Gentiles, within which the unclean were not allowed to enter. Thus absurdly he suffered a still viler crowd to remain in possession, and made the first step in rescuing the temple a disqualification for taking further steps at the very time when they were likely to be the most effective. He contented himself with placing a guard of six thousand men in the cloisters, with provision for their regular relief.

But now appears a new element in the conflict. It is John of Giscala, the well-known foe of Josephus in his early movements in Galilee. The power and the audacity of this man were well known; he was now to give proof of his subtlety and treachery. He professed to ally himself with the party of Ananus, and was admitted to their councils and charged with important and confidential missions. Meanwhile, he was in secret correspondence with the Zealots of the temple. In

spite of his oaths and protestations he soon became an object of suspicion to the others. But his power was so great, and his adherents among the party of Ananus itself so numerous, that he could not be shaken off.

Finally, he voluntarily threw off the mask and went over openly to the Zealots. Once there, he gave them the full benefit of his acquaintance with the plans of their opponents. He assured them that their fate was sealed—that Ananus and his party would surely gain possession of the temple, and that they would then be slain without mercy. He counseled them without delay to seek some outside help or alliance.

This advice marked a turning point in the history of the ill-fated city. Had the plans of Ananus been successful and the Zealots crushed as a party, the whole after course of events must unquestionably have been different. The Zealots, at the point of extinction, were saved by taking the advice of John of Giscala. They promptly sent swift messengers to the Idumeans, or Edomites, entreating them to join them in Jerusalem. It was from this fierce and lawless tribe that the haughty and violent Herodian family was sprung. Since the time of Hyrcanus, who had conquered them, they had been incorporated into the Jewish nation. They naturally regarded themselves as having as good a right to admission into the capital city as any other portion of the people.

With great alacrity they flew to arms at the summons, and twenty thousand were on the march before the time appointed. They gave out (and they probably believed) that they were marching to the relief of the city against its enemies. While Ananus listened to his own frivolous and Pharisaic scruples about the outward sacredness of the temple, and lost precious time in parleying with the Zealots, who were trembling for their fate, the Edomites had pushed to the very gates of the city. These they found shut against them, and all admittance was denied them unless they would leave their arms outside or promise to unite with Ananus in punishing the very men who had summoned them to Jerusalem.

Discouraged at this reception and at the failure of all news from the Zealots, who were closely shut up in the inner courts of the temple, the Idumeans were inclined to abandon their enterprise and to return home. A terrible rainstorm, which set in in the evening and continued through the night, and against which they had no other protection than their shields locked over their heads, almost decided them upon this retrograde course. So violent was the tempest, so furious were the wind and rain, so continuous the lightnings and so awful the bellowings that seemed to come from earth and sky at once, that all parties within and without the walls were alarmed. The Idumeans interpreted the storm as a proof of the divine anger at their

hostile movement against the Holy City. Ananus himself took it as a prophecy of the overthrow of his enemies. But for once he paid more attention to omens than to his means of defence.

The full force of the storm was felt on Mount Moriah. The Zealots, learning that their allies had arrived, and that they lay outside the walls without tents or other protection against the furious elements, determined, if possible, to open communication with them. But how could they escape the vigilance of Ananus and his six thousand guards? For it was the custom of Ananus to inspect the guards in person every night, and to make sure that every way of exit from the upper temple was closed. But in this night of storm Ananus relaxed his vigilance, and toward morning allowed his guards to take some sleep.

This was the opportunity of the Zealots; this was their salvation and the destruction of Ananus and his party; this was the beginning of the unnumbered and indescribable woes that like divine vials of wrath were now to be poured out upon the city.

The Zealots, in their eager spying out for some way of communicating with their friends, quickly discovered the vacant posts of the guards. To be sure, the heavy temple-gates, closed and barred, were still in their way, but with saws they managed to cut the bars, the noise of the operation being unheard amid the fury of the storm. With the same implements and under the same protection,

they opened the city-gate opposite to the position of the Idumeans, and the whole city lay utterly at the mercy of two bands of men who were like famished wolves and tigers let loose amid defenceless flocks.

At the opening of the city-gate the Idumeans started back and clapped their hands upon their swords. They dared not trust themselves that it was the act of their friends, but rather supposed that their enemies were about to fall upon them. But in a moment the truth was understood, the fatal junction was made and the doom of the city was sealed.

The first impulse of the Idumeans was to turn wrathfully upon Ananus and those who had kept them out of the city and exposed them to the storm. But the Zealots feared lest their comrades in the temple should be hindered from escaping if any general alarm was raised, and they therefore persuaded the Idumeans first to assail and overcome the temple-guard and set free their friends. As they approached the temple the Zealots arose and attacked the guards in front, and the Idumeans assailed them in the rear.

At first, the guards supposed they had only their prisoners to contend with, and they withstood them valiantly; but when it became clear that they were confronting the half-barbarous Edomites, and that this new and terrible element was inside the city-walls, they were completely unmanned with terror

and surprise. Many of them ceased to use their arms and abandoned the struggle as hopeless. The terrible news soon spread to other parts of the city, and a great wail of lamentation and outcry of women rose above the noise of the storm and mingled with the yells of the Zealots and the groans of the multitudes of the wounded and dying. The fierce Idumeans gave no heed to any cries for mercy. The slaughter was indiscriminate. The temple-courts, which Ananus had so zealously guarded from pollution by the blood of his enemies, now ran in streams with the blood of his friends. And when the light broke in upon that night of terror it revealed eight thousand five hundred corpses piled upon those sacred pavements.

To follow the after history of these beasts of prey would only seem to drench these pages with human gore. Amid the general slaughter instituted by the Idumeans the priests were the chosen victims, among whom fell Ananus, the able but over-scrupulous leader, whose single mistake in relieving the guard during the storm brought destruction upon himself and rapine and slaughter upon the city.

The whole population lay cowering before these desperadoes. The terror was so great that no one had courage openly to lament the death of his nearest relative or friend, or even to bury him. Those who dared to weep or mourn audibly in their own houses were in peril of death them-

selves. Sometimes by night they would venture out to cast a handful of dust upon the unburied corpses as a token that the last rite was not forgotten, although it could not be performed. In this reign of terror no less than twelve thousand citizens perished.

The mockery of a form of trial was on one occasion attempted by the Zealots. They hoped by this means to give some color of justice to one of their most wanton assaults upon the lives of the citizens. They thirsted for the blood of Zacharias, son of Baruch, a man of great influence upon the opposite side, wealthy, independent and bold. They would feel stronger if he were out of their way, and especially if he were condemned by something resembling a legal tribunal. So they summoned by public proclamation seventy principal men, whom they constituted judges, and before whom they accused Zacharias of treasonable communications with the Romans. No proof was furnished; nothing came before the so-called judges but the assertions of the bloodthirsty Zealots.

When Zacharias saw that the proceeding was a mere farce, and that his death was determined upon in advance, he stood up and boldly ridiculed the charges, demonstrating in a few words their utter falsity. Then turning upon the accusers, he poured out a torrent of invective and rebuke, charging upon them their misdeeds and lamenting

the horrible calamities they had brought upon the place.

With difficulty the Zealots refrained from drawing their swords upon him. But they wished to keep up the form of justice, and they hoped for a sentence of condemnation from the shadow of a court which they had set up. In this, however, they were mistaken; the seventy declared Zacharias innocent, to their own imminent peril. The Zealots received the decision with a howl of disappointed rage; two of them buried their swords in the body of Zacharias on the spot, although it was in the midst of the temple, and jeered him as he fell; his body they threw down into the deep valley alongside the temple. The seventy judges were smitten with the flat of the swords and were driven from the temple in disgrace.

All this vividly recalls that atrocious murder of Zacharias the priest between the porch and the altar which our Saviour specifies* as the culmination of wrong in the history of the Jewish nation up to that time. Although more than nine hundred years had passed, the dying words of the murdered prophet, "The Lord look upon it and requite it!" † seemed to meet their fulfillment in these scenes of violence and blood. Some, indeed, have supposed that the words of Christ had a prophetic reference to the fate of this later Zacharias. But certain it is that not only the

* Matt. xxiii. 35. † 2 Chron. xxiv. 20–22.

blood of the old prophet, but that of Christ himself, lay at the door of Jerusalem, and the generation guilty of that last act, now men advanced in years, were suffering the heavy penalty of that crime. "Verily, I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation." * If the woes of Jerusalem were great beyond parallel, the sin of rejecting and crucifying the Messiah of their own nation and the Saviour of the whole world, the Lord of life and glory, was the worst that could possibly be committed by men. Their only defence was that made for them in the Saviour's dying plea: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

The Idumeans, although supposed to be of ruder and wilder stock than the Jews themselves, even as Esau, the founder of the race, was a man of coarser nature than his brother Jacob, nevertheless grew weary and disgusted with the work of slaughter long before the Zealots did. They began to remonstrate with their associates, in fact, for misrepresenting the object for which they had been invited into the city. They found no disposition among the people, such as the Zealots had represented, to betray the city into the hands of the Romans. As for those who shut the gates against the Idumeans on the night of their arrival, they had been punished the same night. They wished no longer to be a party to the violent and

* Matt. xxiii. 36.

illegal acts of the Zealots; the time might come when they would be held accountable for them. They determined to leave the city. Before doing so they opened the doors of the prisons and released about two thousand captives, who instantly left the city and joined a robber chief named Simon of Gioras.

The withdrawal of the Idumeans was a great surprise to all parties. It seemed to show that a greater regard for the lives of the citizens and for the laws and good order of the city was felt by those outside than those within its walls. Even Edom was capable of a thrill of mercy which the fanatics of Jerusalem could not feel. For the Zealots, after the departure of their allies, were more audacious than ever. Every day furnished its new victims. It seemed as if the total extermination of the higher classes had been determined upon.

The scars of the patriot soldier Niger were no protection against their brutal violence. As they were murdering him he begged that at least they would bury his body, but they declared they would not give a spot of earth for his grave. With his dying breath he called down famine and pestilence and mutual slaughter upon their heads—imprecations which were soon and justly to be fulfilled against them.

In the mean time, the Roman army lay inactive in Ptolemais and in other places nearly a hundred

miles distant from Jerusalem. Some of the officers began to be impatient at the delay, and ventured to remonstrate with Vespasian for what seemed to be indifference or blindness to the divided state of the city, which they thought their best opportunity and a plain indication of Providence in their own favor. But Vespasian was fully alive to the state of things. He saw that by these intestine and bloody strifes the Jews were rapidly draining their own strength, and that the surest way to unite them would be to make an advance upon the city. "Let them alone," he said; "God is fighting for the Romans; he is a better leader than I. A glorious success, gained without fighting, is more profitable than the dangers of battle. Wait and let these Jews destroy one another."

Notwithstanding the close guard kept by the Zealots, some of the Jews, especially those who had money to bribe the guards, managed to escape every day. But the roadsides were lined with the bodies of these miserable fugitives; for upon any who incurred their displeasure the Zealots would not suffer the rites of burial to be bestowed, so that the shocking spectacle of disfigured and swollen corpses could be seen on every hand. All tender and kindly sentiments, all regard for the most powerful of human instincts, were lost among these wretches.

Such was the universal misery that the living counted the dead happy, and began to envy even the unburied corpses, whose fate had already been

decided, in comparison with their own insupportable fears of what was yet to come. For the Zealots not only trampled upon human laws; they derided the laws of God. And as for the oracles of the prophets, they ridiculed them as tricks of jugglers, while yet they were the instruments of bringing their most tremendous predictions to pass.

But now the Zealots themselves were torn by opposite factions. John of Giscala had not escaped from Titus and his body of cavalry only to form an insignificant member of one of the parties in Jerusalem. We have seen how he distinguished himself by turning traitor to Ananus and his party. Among the Zealots his boldness, his ambition and his power over bad men were felt, and in time he had gathered about him a set of men who adhered so closely to him that they formed a kind of body-guard. The others looked on with suspicion, fearing that John was aiming to make himself king of the Jews. Thus three evils now threatened the city at once—war, sedition and a tyrant; of which war was the least.

A fourth great calamity, as reckoned by Josephus, was the general outbreak of sedition and lawless movements throughout the country in sympathy with the disturbed state of the capital city. In particular, the robber band known as Sicarii (or Assassins), who a year before had surprised the Roman garrison of the strong fortress of Masada, and who had retained possession ever since, now

broke forth and overran the surrounding country and made themselves masters of the neighboring village of Engedi. The men were driven away and seven hundred women and children were slain. The stores of provisions and fruits were carried away to Masada, and the whole region was laid waste. Many neighborhoods were similarly afflicted by local bands of robbers, too small to be called armies and too large for mere gangs of thieves. In some quarters the inhabitants repelled the marauders, but the country as a whole was in a distracted and miserable state, not much better off than the city itself.

Amid these tumults the winter wore away, and the spring of A. D. 68 saw the Roman army once more in motion. If Vespasian had listened to the representations of the Jewish refugees in his camp, who believed that in the triumph of the Romans was the only hope of the deliverance of Jerusalem, he would have opened the campaign by marching directly upon the city. His own feeling of pity for the calamities of the people drew him in the same direction. However, his first movements were directed against Gadara, a prominent city of Perea, a few miles south-east of the Sea of Galilee. The people, without informing the garrison, sent an embassy to Vespasian offering to surrender the place. When the soldiers heard of it they put to death the leader of the movement, and exposed his corpse unburied; having taken this revenge, they aban-

doned the city. The people not only opened the gates, but they tore down the walls and welcomed the Roman army with acclamations.

No sooner had Vespasian taken possession of Gadara than he despatched Placidus with thirty-five hundred men in pursuit of the retiring garrison. After several skirmishes Placidus drove it into a walled town called Bethannabris, which he captured and destroyed with sword and torch, in true Roman fashion. A large body of fugitives, escaping, roused the surrounding country and collected a numerous band, who aimed to reach the city of Jericho, on the west side of the Jordan. Arrived on the banks of the river, they found it swollen and impassable. Placidus, with his victorious cohorts, was close behind them. Thus brought to bay, they turned upon their pursuers and fought a desperate battle, with the swollen river at their backs. Of course they were utterly routed, slaughtered and drowned. The Jordan was choked with their bodies, and the Dead Sea was corrupted by the immense number of floating corpses which its dense waters upbore. Fifteen thousand were slain, twenty-five hundred were carried off captives and an immense booty in flocks and herds was taken from that country, then so rich in pastoral possessions.

Still leaving Jerusalem unassailed, Vespasian marched southward from Gadara to Cæsarea, and pushed his conquests in the south of Judea. Ad-

vancing from Cæsarea, he took Antipatris and besieged Emmaus. Penetrating southward to Idumea, he captured two towns, where he slew ten thousand and brought away alive only one thousand captives; then, turning northward, he appeared before Jericho. Here the detachment under Placidus rejoined the main army. Jericho was a last resort to the people who had been swept out of the whole surrounding region by the devastations of the Roman soldiers. And now their pursuers were here, in vastly greater force than ever, there was nothing left for them to do but to fly and scatter in the wilderness which lay along the shores of the Dead Sea.

The city of Jericho was deserted, and the Romans took possession of the whole region without a struggle. The extraordinary abundance, variety and richness of its fruits, its gardens and palm-groves, its fountains of sweet waters cured by the miracle of Elisha,* and still possessing unusual nourishment for plants and animals, must have refreshed the travel-worn soldiers and fitted them for the greater undertaking which still lay before them. Jerusalem, in fact, was under siege, for every approach was cut off and every outlying region to which she could look for supplies or for aid was in the hands of her enemies.

But now, while all waited in breathless expectation for the appearance of the Roman standards

* 2 Kings ii. 19-22.

on the brow of Olivet, news came from Rome that made the ambitious Vespasian pause. Nero had died (June 6, A. D. 68), and Galba, Otho and Vitellius each enjoyed a brief term of imperial power in the eighteen months which had elapsed. It might speedily be the turn of Vespasian, especially if his claims were backed by a powerful and victorious army. Thus a season of rest in the midst of the abundant supplies of the Jordan valley could be allowed to his army while the general kept watch upon the course of events, ready to improve the opportunity to take possession of the whole empire, whose remote boundaries he was now fighting to maintain.

Meantime, Jerusalem failed to reap the great advantages of these delays, but was still torn with factions and bleeding at every pore with internal wounds and strife. Simon of Gioras, leader of one of the robber bands in the south, encouraged by the admission of the Idumeans into Jerusalem, elated by successes in various excursions through the country, prepared to advance upon the capital. The Zealots, anticipating his movements, marched out of the city and attempted to drive him back. They failed, and were compelled to retire within the walls.

Simon, however, dared not follow up his successes at once. Returning to Idumea, he carried on an extensive campaign in the south. Among his captures was the exceedingly ancient city of

Hebron and its fertile plain, on which stood a famous tree, called by Josephus a turpentine tree, and regarded in his day as being as old as the Creation. There still stands, on or near the spot, an immense and very aged oak tree, twenty-three feet in circumference and making a shade ninety feet in diameter. Whether it be the same as the turpentine (or terebinth) tree of Josephus, or not, the existence of such an immense and aged tree is proof of the vigor of the soil on which it flourished. It is now known as the "oak of Abraham."

The successes of Simon aroused anew the fears of the Zealots. Unwilling to meet him again in open conflict, they laid ambuscades for him, by one of which they gained possession of Simon's wife. With great and unseemly demonstrations of triumph they brought her into the city, expecting, beyond a doubt, that Simon would submit to any terms in order to regain possession of her. On the contrary, he came raging to the walls like a wounded wild beast, seizing, tormenting and mutilating or slaying every person who ventured outside the gates, and scarcely refraining from devouring their flesh. Those whom he allowed to return alive he would deprive of their hands, and send them back bearing fearful messages to the citizens. So terrible were his threats that the Zealots were frightened into surrendering the woman. They showed more dread of Simon than of the Roman army itself.

And now divisions arose among the Zealots themselves. The pretensions of John of Giscala and his followers became intolerable to the others, especially to such of the Idumeans as still remained in the city. The opponents of John, embracing some of his own Galileans, rose against him and drove him and his adherents from every part of the city except the temple. There they successfully withstood the Idumeans; they even prepared to come forth and give them battle. The Idumeans, not trusting their own strength, held a council with the high priests, at which it was agreed to open the gates to the ruffian Simon of Gioras, and to invite him and his band within the walls as their only security against the excesses of the Galileans.

Assuming an air of condescension, Simon entered the city and in a lordly manner granted them his protection. The giddy people, thinking only of deliverance from present evils, received Simon with joyful acclamations, hailing him as savior and deliverer, when it was only a second and worse oppressor whom they were adding to the one already found to be intolerable. For Simon soon showed that his own authority was all that he really cared for, and those who invited him into the city, as well as those whom they opposed, must yield to his commands or be reckoned as his enemies.

The calamitous admission of Simon took place in March, A. D. 69. It robbed John and his

Zealots of all control over the city, and shut them up in the temple, where they were besieged by Simon. But the natural strength of this part of the city gave the advantage to John and his party. In addition to the usual defences, they had built four large towers, so that, with inferior forces, they were easily able to hold Simon at bay.

In such fierce quarrels the spring and summer dragged drearily along. The city, every moment liable to be assailed and besieged by the Romans, was carrying on a bloody siege within its own walls. In the desperate effort of one faction to overthrow the other, no common plan of defence, no careful hoarding of provisions, no wisely-devised system of hindrances to the enemy's approach, was considered and carried out by the joint action of a thoroughly aroused and united people. It was as if the crew of a disabled and sinking ship should spend the few remaining moments in which they might arrange some plan of escape, in contending for the mastery of the doomed vessel.

And now the cooped-up faction in the temple divided into two hostile bands; the one consisted of John of Giscala and his adherents; the other, which had revolted from John, was headed by Eleazar, a man whose own ambition was wounded by the lofty bearing of John. Eleazar led his followers into the inner courts and more elevated parts of the temple. Here, in the consecrated stores, was abundance of provisions. Here they

fortified themselves against John, having the same advantage of position over him as he had over Simon. And now appeared the scene, unprecedented in history, of three hostile factions of the same people fighting against each other within and around their common temple of worship—Eleazar attacking John from the Holy of Holies above; John resisting him from the lower courts of the temple; and Simon fighting furiously against both factions from the lower ground immediately without the temple-area. And, what was stranger still, worshipers were allowed by all parties to visit the temple and perform their accustomed rites, although the struggle was not suspended while the services were going on, unless on the sabbath day. Many a worshiper was interrupted in his solemn duties by the falling of missiles upon the pavement and about the altars. Many of the officiating priests, and many who came from the ends of the earth to gratify their pious zeal by offering in this holy place, fell victims in sight of their own sacrifices, stricken down by the weapons of this unholy war and sprinkling the altars with their blood. The dead bodies of strangers were thus mingled with those of the combatants, and the blood of men lay in pools on the once-sacred pavement.

Sometimes the forces of John would descend from the temple-area and drive off those of Simon. They would then make an expedition through the streets of Jerusalem, plundering and destroying as

if they were in a hostile city; then, in turn, Simon would rally his men and drive the Zealots back to their stronghold, doubling the devastation along the route; so that the district immediately about the temple was completely desolated, and large supplies of provisions were destroyed which would have been of incalculable value during the siege. Thus madness ruled in the doomed city, and a large part of the work of their enemies was done by the infatuated citizens themselves. Had they been united, they might have held the Roman legions at bay, and maintained a position like that of the unconquered Germans on the northern borders of the empire.

Meanwhile, at the close of the year 69, Vespasian actually became emperor of Rome and ruler of the whole known world. Mindful of the prophecy of Josephus, he released him from his bonds and honored and rewarded him as a friend. Early in the year 70 he commissioned his son Titus to complete the war by the subjugation of the Jewish capital.

CHAPTER XXXI.

TITUS BEFORE JERUSALEM.

THE city which was now the object of the third campaign of the Roman army in Judea was the most interesting in the history of the world. Here alone the knowledge and worship of the true God had been maintained, and here the salvation of the world had been wrought out by the Son of God. Here was the true temple, built according to divine guidance by one chosen of God for the purpose, and here was the centre of a government ordained by direct revelation from Heaven. From this city it was the divine purpose that the knowledge of the true God and of the Saviour of mankind should go abroad through the world; and now, while the waves of a great storm of war were swelling around it, messengers who had gone from it years before were publishing the gospel and establishing Christian churches throughout every part of the Roman empire, and even in Rome itself.

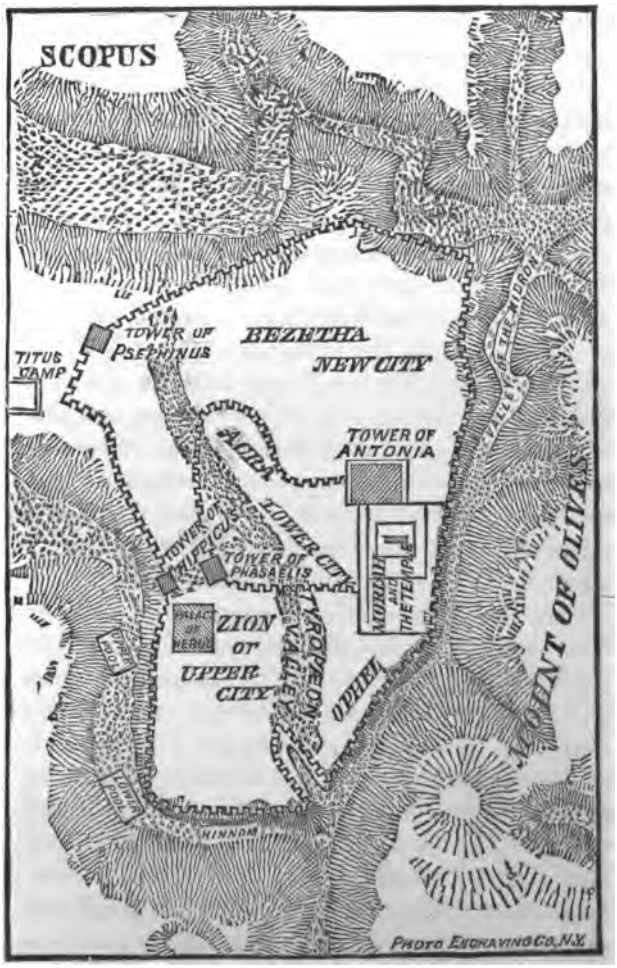
But the mass of the people, the rulers and the priests, having rejected the gospel and mistaken the purposes of God, and rebelled against his law, still proudly claimed to be the only true people of God,

and desperately resolved to free themselves from the hated Roman yoke. They subjected their favored and beautiful city to the direst calamities—to internal strifes of the most horrible violence and to external siege and assault that brought it to a lamentable end. Thus Jerusalem, beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, the glorious type of the Christian Church, the fairest emblem of heaven itself, became the abode of men scarcely better than devils incarnate, and a type of hell rather than of heaven.

From the beginning, when the site of Jerusalem was in the hands of the Canaanitish tribes, it was one of the strongest and most difficult to capture, and remained longest in possession of the aborigines. Its military strength was still great enough to put to the full test all the powers of the conquerors of the world. It was built principally upon two hills—Mount Zion, the higher of the two, forming the south-west portion of the city, and Acra forming the north-western quarter. East of Acra was Mount Moriah, crowned with the immense structures of the temple, with the Tower of Antonia on its northern side, together constituting the citadel. These were separated from the Mount of Olives by the Kidron ravine. Between Zion on the south-west and Acra and Moriah on the north and east ran a deep depression, called the Valley of the Tyropeon, through the midst of the city, the sides of which were occupied by houses. On

other sides, particularly on the west of Zion and the east of Moriah, the sides of the hills were precipitous and inaccessible. A depression which formerly existed between Acra and Moriah had been partly filled up by the Maccabees. The temple was accessible by a narrow passage from the Tower of Antonia on the north. A bridge over the Tyropeon connected the temple with the "upper" city, on Mount Zion. North of Acra and Moriah was the New City, or Bezetha, enclosed by a wall built by Herod Agrippa.

Thus we have a city set upon hills, for the most part sloping gently on their inside faces, but presenting abrupt surfaces to those outside. Wherever these hills were regarded as accessible to an enemy they were defended by a triple wall; in other places a single wall was regarded as sufficient. The third or outside wall extended beyond Acra on the north, and included the hill called Bezetha. This wall Agrippa I. had intended to strengthen in such a manner as, in the opinion of Josephus, would have made the city impregnable, but the Romans interfered and required him to desist. It was formed of stones of extraordinary size, some being thirty-five feet in length. Agrippa had carried it to the height of seventeen and a half feet, and had made it of the same enormous thickness. The Jews, in expectation of the siege, had doubled its height and raised battlements and towers on the top, so that it was in places forty-



MAP OF ANCIENT JERUSALEM.

five feet high. This was a formidable protection against the artillery or the mines of ancient warfare.

The second wall swept around from Mount Zion on the west to the Tower of Antonia on the east, excluding that part of the city called Bezetha. The first and oldest wall defended Mount Zion, the temple, Antonia and the southern part of the city; so that there were actually four localities to be captured before Jerusalem could be won: first, Bezetha; second, Acra; third, Mount Zion; and fourth, and strongest of all, the citadel Antonia and the temple.

The whole circuit of these walls was strengthened at intervals of three hundred and fifty feet by towers thirty-five feet in width and rising thirty-five feet in solid masonry above the walls; additional stories, containing chambers and upper rooms and large tanks to hold rain-water, greatly increased their height. The most remarkable for situation was the Tower of Psephinus, on the north-western corner of the first wall, close to which Titus pitched his camp. It arose to the height of over one hundred and twenty-two feet, and its commanding position gave it a most extensive view. It was claimed by Josephus that the whole territory of Judea, to Arabia on the south and to the Mediterranean on the west, could be seen from its top. As this north-west corner of the city was more than twenty-six hundred feet above the sea,

and with the elevation of the tower altogether nearly twenty-eight hundred feet, and as the sea was but a little more than thirty miles distant, the intervening country gradually sloping toward the shore, there is no good reason for questioning the assertion.

Other towers were still higher, but did not occupy such commanding sites. Hippicus, a solid structure forty-three feet square, threatened the enemy on the outermost corner of Mount Zion with a height of one hundred and forty feet. Phasaelis, on the first wall, east of Hippicus, was one hundred and sixty-seven feet high. From a distance it looked like the famous lighthouse at Alexandria. In this stately building the robber Simon made his abode. Farther on, upon the same inner wall, was the Tower of Mariamne, seventy-six feet in height. The perfection and massiveness of the masonry of these towers would have been the envy of modern workmen. They were built of immense masses of white marble, thirty-five feet long, half as wide and eight feet high, and they were fitted together so closely that the whole tower looked as if hewn in one solid block from the quarry.

Behind these three towers on Mount Zion stood that remarkable structure, the palace of Herod, itself a smaller fortress, surrounded by a wall thirty-five feet high, flanked with towers, the courts paved with every variety of marble and

furnished with barrack-rooms sufficient for a large force of defenders.

But the strongest of the defences of Jerusalem, and generally the last to yield, was the temple, with the adjoining fortress of Antonia. The fortress stood on a rocky eminence nearly ninety feet high, at the north-west corner of the temple. Built by Herod, it illustrated the magnificence and thoroughness of all his architectural work. The face of the rock had been coated with smooth slabs of marble, making ascent impossible. Above the rock the fortress rose to an additional height of seventy-six feet. It appeared like a vast square tower enclosing four other towers, one on each corner, varying from eighty to a hundred and twenty feet in height.

High above the whole city rose the temple, on a platform or area nearly seven hundred feet square. On the east this area was bounded by a precipice four hundred feet deep. This had been faced by Solomon with huge blocks of stone; the other sides had been enclosed in the same manner. Around the edge of this quadrangle ran a strong and lofty wall, with gates on the north, west and south opening upon the city. Within this area arose a terrace containing the Court of the Israelites, seventeen feet higher than the rest; still above this, and surrounded by a wall seventy feet high, was the Inner Court, which could be reached by an ascent of nineteen steps. Twelve

more steps led to the enclosure of the temple itself, and to that great gate of Nicanor which we have already described, the tower of which rose to the height of one hundred and thirty-two feet.

One may readily see how this succession of terraces and walls would make the temple, even if an enemy ever scaled the rocky face of the precipices and reached the area, a place of prodigious strength for resisting an assault. Its great elevation, its massive foundations, its courts and walls of pure white marble, its gateways, roofs and pinnacles flashing with the most lavish ornamentation of gold and silver, constituted a spectacle of rare magnificence. Seen at a distance, it was likened to "a mountain of snow fretted with golden pinnacles."

Against this cluster of fortresses, which Tacitus himself saw was designed with forethought to meet the contingencies of a prolonged siege, the son of Vespasian and the future emperor of Rome led his legions. It was the spring of the year 70 after Christ when his army advanced, with the usual imposing array, through Samaria into Judea, and encamped upon Gibeah of Saul, four miles north of Jerusalem. Titus himself, not trusting the reports of scouts, determined to make a reconnoissance of the famous city in person. Taking only six hundred horsemen, he advanced to the suburbs, not without expectations that his mere appearance

and the certainty that they would soon be attacked by his army would frighten the inhabitants into submission. He calculated also too much upon the strength of the peace sentiment and of the opposition to the fierce and bloody factions which controlled the city and directed the war measures. The opposition was too weak to make any demon-



ROMAN HORSEMAN.

stration, and the turbulent city lay in a deceptive peace and quiet before Titus and his cavalry riding, almost like another famous "six hundred" of modern times, "into the jaws of death."

Descending the hillside, the troop began to approach the northern or third city-wall. The head of the column had left the main road, and was turning toward the right, where the lofty Tower of Psephinus attracted their attention. Titus,

eager, incautious, unarmed with helmet or breastplate, deluded by the prevailing quiet, was riding in front, when suddenly the city-gate flew open, and a strong body of Jews rushed out, taking the horsemen on the left flank and cutting the column in two; so that Titus and those immediately around him were separated from the main body, still marching down by the road. Never was Roman general in a more perilous position. To advance over unknown ground occupied with orchards and divided by stone walls and trenches, close under the city-walls, was impossible; to retreat among the thousands of the enemy who had thrown themselves directly across his path seemed equally impossible. Yet this was his only course. So, turning his horse's head, he called upon his men to follow, and charged boldly upon the enemy, all of whom were on foot.

He passed unharmed through the volleys of darts and arrows, and cleaving down those who approached him and riding over the bodies of others, he and his companions, with the loss of two men and one horse, succeeded in rejoining the main body. Profiting by this narrow escape, and having seen quite as much of the city as they cared to at this time, they made their way back to Gibeah. Titus too had now a better measure of the temper of the city and of the opposition which he must encounter. As for the Jews, this successful sally filled them with exultation. Their courage

and resolution were vastly strengthened and their hopes of success raised to an absurd height. But they were unable to take any advantage of their achievement, and the enemy was left unmolested to carry out his plans.

As the army of Titus was strengthened by the arrival of new legions, the chief camp was moved to Mount Scopus, in full sight of Jerusalem on the north-west. Half a mile to the rear the fifth legion was ordered to fortify another camp. The tenth legion, just arrived from Jericho, was posted on the Mount of Olives. Thus the three parties who contended for supremacy in the city might behold three camps of the enemy arrayed equally against them all. Separately, they could do nothing to drive them away. Carrying on their fierce mutual contentions, they would only make the capture of the city and their own overthrow secure. A little common sense at last made its way into their heads.

"What do we here," they said one to another, "when we suffer three fortified walls to be built close around us to coop us up and to choke our breath, while we sit idly by as spectators, our armor laid aside, just as if it was something for our advantage which the Romans are doing? Are we courageous only against ourselves, and shall the Romans easily become masters of the city by our sedition?"

A simultaneous attack upon the tenth legion,

which was fortifying its camp on the Mount of Olives, was agreed upon. Mutual animosity now gave way to fanatical violence against the common enemy. Seizing their arms, the united body of insurgents made a furious rush down into the valley of the Kidron and up the side of Olivet. The Roman legionaries were surprised while unarmed and working at their entrenchments. Overwhelmed by the suddenness and strange manner of the attack, utterly unlike regular warfare, they fell back in disorder, and many were slain before they could reach their arms. Increasing swarms of Jews kept pouring from the gates, filling the soldiers with greater panic and threatening by mere force of numbers the utter destruction of the disorganized legion; when Titus, hastening around from the camp on Scopus with a body of picked men, fell upon the flank of the attacking force and drove it into the valley.

For a moment the Jews were disconcerted, and began to retire to the city-walls, from which, however, they kept up their attack. But when, in obedience to the orders of Titus, the soldiers of the legion returned to Mount Olivet in order to resume work on their camp, the Jews mistook the movement for flight. The watchman upon the wall shook his garment as a signal to those within the city, whereupon the multitude poured from the gate with all the violence of wild beasts. Nothing could withstand the fury of their attack. Like

stones hurled out of great engines of war, they broke to pieces the ranks of the enemy and put them to flight up the sides of Olivet. Only Titus with a few soldiers maintained his ground and beat back his opponents, while all the others fled in confusion. The soldiers of the tenth legion, who had resumed work upon the camp, seeing the disorder in the valley, once more fled panic-struck from their entrenchments, and the whole legion was dispersed.

It was at first supposed by the fleeing Romans that Titus had fled with the rest, but when he was seen maintaining his ground and exposed to imminent peril, his soldiers were ashamed of their panic, and, more frightened at the thought of the loss of their general than at the worst that the Jews could inflict upon themselves, they rallied and turned upon their pursuers. And now, having the advantage of position, they easily drove them down the hillside and crowded them into the valley. Here Titus managed to keep them at bay, while once more the legionaries were sent to complete their interrupted work. These combats occurred on the eve of the Passover, April 13, A. D. 70.

For the last time the people had assembled in Jerusalem to celebrate this great national festival. Amid the deepening shadows of calamity and overthrow they recalled the proud days of deliverance from Egypt and the heaven-sent victory over Pharaoh and his hosts. It added to the misfortunes

of Jerusalem that a great multitude of pilgrim-worshipers, some from beyond the Euphrates, had reached the city and were within the walls before the enemy had blockaded the roads, and were afterward compelled to remain. This greatly swelled the population and increased the demand for food, without proportionally strengthening the defence.

The opening of the gates of the inner temple and the passing to and fro of great crowds of worshipers could not but provoke the factions of John and Eleazar, occupying different parts of the structure, to some hostile acts against each other. John, as probably the more unscrupulous of the two, hesitated not to pollute the most sacred places with fraud, violence and bloodshed. He armed a number of his followers and disguised them in ordinary garments thrown over their armor. Thus attired, they easily passed for worshipers, and were freely admitted to the inner courts. Once inside, they threw off their disguises and appeared as soldiers to the astonished multitude. A scene of wild confusion and bloodshed followed. The followers of Eleazar fled in all directions, some of them taking refuge in the caverns and underground passages. His faction was completely crushed. John now became sole master of the temple, while Simon continued to hold possession of the city.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE SIEGE BEGUN.

AND now the services of the last Passover ever held in Jerusalem were over. Blood other than that of the sacrifices had flowed around the altars. Sad forebodings darkened the once-joyous festivities. A scene of frightful discord and confusion interrupted the worship. The chant of priestly voices was mingled with shrieks of the panic-stricken and groans of the wounded and dying. Along the line of suburbs, just freshening in the verdure of spring-time, the dark masses of the Roman legions could be seen digging their entrenchments and setting up their standards—the "abomination of desolation" in the eyes of the Jews. Within the walls were cooped up the crowded multitudes of inhabitants and strangers,* none of whom could now escape if they wished, and many of whom had fled to Jerusalem as a last refuge from the Romans, and would not escape if they could.

These masses of men, vigorous, resolute, quickened to intense energy by the most fanatical devotion to country and hatred to the enemy, reckless

* Put by Josephus at three millions.

of danger, ready to sacrifice their lives, quick in movement and fertile in devices,—why might they not, behind and upon those immense walls and lofty towers and in fierce sallies through the gates, have worn out, and at length driven away, the half a dozen legions with their undisciplined auxiliaries, altogether scarcely more than two hundred thousand strong? The want of a head, the lack of unity, the absence of organization, and, above all, the failure of faith and piety and the substitution of the fury of zealots, assassins and robbers for humble trust in God—in a word, the breaking down of the national life—were the causes which laid this vast multitude prostrate before what seems but a handful of besiegers. Josephus gives us the number of the fighting men of the two factions as less than twenty-four thousand.

Titus now prepared to advance his camp from Scopus to a point within striking distance of the city-walls. The rough intervening country was first leveled by the labor of the Roman army. The beautiful gardens and groves were cut down, the water-courses were obliterated, the picturesque rocks were broken to pieces, the landmarks were destroyed, and the whole surface of the country was ruthlessly transformed into a place of arms.

The Jews, instead of fiercely assaulting these working-parties, determined to try a stratagem, based upon the supposed belief of Titus and the Romans in the existence of a strong peace senti-

ment in the city. A considerable body of Jews were one day noticed standing in a confused and embarrassed manner some distance in front of the walls, while those on top seemed to threaten them, and at the same time beckoned to the Romans, as if desirous of surrendering the city. The pantomime was supposed to mean that the peace-party had expelled the insurgent leaders, and now had control of affairs. So it was interpreted by the Roman soldiers, who proposed to advance at once in a body and profit by the offer to surrender.

Titus, however, was too wary to be thus entrapped. He ordered the troops to remain in their positions. A few who were in front of the main body seized their arms and hastened toward the gates. Those outside of the walls, acting as a decoy, retired as the soldiers advanced, until the latter were fairly within range of the flanking towers, when the Jews rushed upon them and surrounded them, attacking them from the walls and from every side, so that great numbers were killed and wounded, and the fugitives, who barely escaped to their camp, were covered with shame at their misadventure. Titus even ordered them to be punished with death, as the penalty for disobedience of orders of which they had been guilty, and was only moved from his purpose by the earnest plea of their fellow-soldiers and by promises of absolute regularity and good discipline in the future.

The ground upon the north and west of the city having now been leveled, Titus pitched his camp near the Tower of Psephinus, which protected the north-west corner of the outer or third wall. It was against this third wall that he intended to direct his operations. Escorted by a strong body of horse, he made another circuit of the whole city, perhaps hoping that yet some indication of a disposition to yield might appear before the attack should actually begin. Josephus was with the party. In company with Nicanor, an intimate friend of the emperor, he ventured near the wall in the hope of opening communications with the besieged, when an arrow was discharged at them from the walls which pierced the shoulder of Nicanor.

Titus was greatly incensed at this piece of barbarism perpetrated upon his friend when acting as a peacemaker. Those that would not listen to any terms of peace should now have their fill of war. He at once gave liberty to his soldiers to burn and destroy everything left standing in the suburbs. He commanded them to strip the country of its trees in order to furnish material to construct the huge mounds which he was raising against the walls.

Meanwhile, the great catapults were already in operation, hurling stones of more than a hundred pounds weight over the walls and far into the city. The machines of the tenth legion, posted

upon Mount Olivet, were noted as larger and more powerful than the rest. The stones which they threw, being of the white limestone of the country, were such conspicuous objects that their coming could readily be seen as well as heard. The watchmen gave warning when the engine was let go, in the singular exclamation, "The son cometh," upon which all in the path of the missile threw themselves flat on their faces, just as now-a-days soldiers do on the approach of a bomb. Presently the Romans took to blackening the stones, which made it more difficult to mark their flight. Sometimes many of the Jews would be struck down at a single blow.

As the engines increased in number and their disastrous effects became more manifest, the factions in the temple and in the city once more laid aside their differences and joined in a common defence. Together they manned the walls and fought off the attacks of the Roman engines with fiery torches and with frequent sallies from the gates. To repel these sallies and to preserve the engines from destruction by fire kept Titus and his soldiers busy. Meanwhile, the battering-rams had begun to play against the walls, but their strokes were without effect upon the seventeen feet of solid masonry. Only the corner of a tower projecting beyond the wall was thrown down, without any harm to the wall itself.

The lack of humanity on the part of Titus,

who in his after career was eminent for that quality, and was even called "the love and delight of the human race," was painfully evident from the beginning of the siege. A very violent sally was made upon the works to the west of the city, in repelling which a single captive was taken from the Jews. Titus, whose head-quarters were close to the scene, ordered the captive to be crucified in sight of the city-walls as a warning of the fate which awaited the rest of the garrison if they persisted in their obstinacy.

The Romans, weary with the day's labors and conflicts, retired to rest. Suddenly, in the profound silence of midnight, a tremendous crash was heard. The slumbering soldiers started to their feet in amazement, and, suspecting some dire contrivance of the enemy, flew to arms. But no enemy appeared. A bewildering silence prevailed. Each man began to suspect his neighbor, and demanded the watchword to reassure himself that the Jews were not already in possession of the camp. A universal panic seemed about to prevail, when it was learned that one of their own towers, just raised to a height of ninety feet upon the embankment, had given way and fallen by its own weight. The iron armor with which it had been plated doubtless was the cause of its fall.

Two other towers of similar construction still stood, and were a terrible annoyance to the de-

fenders of the wall. They were proof against fire and other methods of attack, and their great height gave the Romans who held the top, complete command over the lower positions of the Jews. So constant and so deadly were the showers of missiles that rained down from these towers that the defence of the walls had to be abandoned, and the battering-rams were left to ply their destructive blows unhindered. One of these huge instruments was noticed especially by the Jews, and named by them Nico, or "the Victor:" it was the largest in the Roman lines, and its blows conquered all opposing objects. Under its assaults at last the outer or third wall gave way, and the Jews, abandoning the suburb Bezetha and the intervening ground, retired without a struggle to the second wall. This was on the fifteenth day of the siege, or about the first day of May.

Without delay Titus followed up this great advantage by ordering the second wall to be attacked. But here the conflict was most obstinate. The Jews made frequent and violent sallies, and, though these were repelled, the Romans gained no advantage over their opponents. When night came the combatants reluctantly ceased their strife. They lay upon their arms, scarcely indulging in sleep, and ready with the first morning light to renew the bitter and bloody struggle.

Day after day the conflict was renewed. Each side was intensely ambitious to maintain its ancient

reputation. The Jews rivaled each other in acts of daring. Simon gained great repute as a leader. Every eye was upon him and every soldier was ready to sacrifice his life in executing his commands. The Romans, thoroughly drilled in war and unused to defeat, were animated to the highest pitch by the presence of Titus, who was everywhere seen joining in the battle and observing any special act of valor on the part of the soldiers, which it was well understood would meet its reward. A Roman knight, named Longinus, threw himself alone into the midst of a body of Jews, slew two of them and escaped unharmed to his own party.

On the other hand a Jew, Castor by name, with a company of ten men, occupied a tower against which Titus directed his battering-rams. By pretending to wish to treat for a surrender he kept the engines quiet for a considerable time while he parleyed with the commander himself and with a messenger whom Titus sent to complete the arrangements. Finally, he set fire to the tower and he and his men disappeared in the flames. The Romans wondered at this seeming act of self-sacrifice, but the cunning Jew had leaped into one of the underground passages which abounded in the foundations of the city, and had escaped in safety.

The conflict, however, was closed in five days, when the second wall gave way before the assaults of the Romans, and its defenders disappeared, leaving it to its fate. Titus, with only a moderate

armed force, passed through the breach into the central part of the city. Intending to treat the conquered inhabitants not as the victims of war, but rather as the victims of a violent and dominant war-faction, he took no proper pains to secure his retreat by casting down the wall or enlarging the breach. He issued strict commands to his soldiers not to kill, burn or spoil, and to attack those only who appeared with arms in their hands. The Zealots pretended to regard this conciliatory policy as a confession of weakness, and they not only assailed the Roman soldiers who had entered through the breach, but they threatened death to any of the citizens who dared speak of surrender; and they actually cut the throats of those whom they caught in such negotiations.

The fighting in the streets and from the houses now became serious. Besides assailing the small band of Romans inside the wall, the Jews rallied and made one of their sudden and violent sallies upon those who were without. So effective was this attack that the walls were actually retaken from the Romans, and the party who had penetrated into the city were entirely cut off from the main body. This little band was in such peril that, with all their coolness and discipline, they barely escaped from utter destruction. The Jews swarmed around them in constantly increasing numbers. Every lane and street was perfectly known to them, but the Romans were entangled in

a labyrinth of narrow and unknown passage-ways. If the Roman archers had not been able from a distance to ply the mob with a shower of darts and arrows, the troops would all have been cut to pieces. At length, after great losses, they succeeded in extricating themselves with immense difficulty from the plight into which they had fallen, and crowded back through the narrow breach which they had made in the wall. Thus for the second or third time the Romans were nearly ruined by over-confidence in the strength of the peace sentiment in the city. They were compelled to renounce the advantages which they had gained and to retire from the wall which they had captured at great cost.

Great was the elation of the Jews at this victory over the Romans. They deluded themselves into the belief that after such a narrow escape the Romans would not again venture within the walls, and that the city would not fall into their hands. For the moment they forgot the famine that so early in the siege was beginning to prey upon the people, and the frightful miseries under which the cooped-up multitudes, without resources, were already suffering, and must continue to suffer in a prolonged siege. In fact, they were not at all loath to have the burden of the siege diminished by the death of the dependent people, and rejoiced quite as much when the numbers of the peace-party were reduced by famine as when their armed foes were struck down in war.

Their boasting was of brief duration. It took but three days' fighting for the Romans to recover their lost position. On the fourth day they penetrated the second wall once more, and, instead of contenting themselves with a narrow breach, they demolished the whole wall from end to end, leaving only the towers standing, which they occupied with garrisons.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE FIRST WALL ASSAILED.

BEFORE proceeding with those last military movements which he foresaw would be the severest and bloodiest of all, Titus resolved to make another effort to bring about a surrender, and thus save his army as well as the people of Jerusalem from an immense amount of suffering. Having reached the outer works of the temple itself, it is not unlikely that he was seized with a degree of awe and reverence for the sacred place which even a heathen might feel. Its vast strength, joined with its marvelous beauty and towering height, probably impressed him with a desire to save it from destruction, as well as to avoid the great labor involved in its capture.

Instead, therefore, of pressing the siege without intermission, Titus resolved to pause for a few days, to distribute the pay due to the army and to make a grand parade in sight of the beleaguered city. The soldiers, arrayed in complete armor, all burnished for the occasion, filed slowly past in seemingly endless lines. The cavalry led their horses dressed in splendid trappings. For four

days this spectacle of overwhelming strength and military pomp continued to move before the eyes of the gazing multitude. The walls, the towers, the cloisters of the temple, the housetops, were black with spectators. The captured suburbs, Acra and Bezetha, were all ablaze with the gleaming of polished weapons. Each soldier, as he filed past, received his pay. It was enough to strike terror into the hearts of the beholders, and it is probable that the multitude of non-combatants was more than ever convinced of the uselessness of further conflict with such a host. But the leaders were conscious of such great crimes that they dared not hope for any mercy. Their case was desperate. They had only the alternative of the manner of their death, whether as warriors or as captives; they preferred to die fighting, and they would listen to no terms.

On the fifth day, Titus, having received no offer of capitulation, ordered the siege to be renewed. Great mounds, or *aggers*, which always formed a part of the Roman siege-works, were raised—one against the Tower of Antonia, where John of Giscala and his followers fought; others against parts of the wall beyond the temple-area, which were held by Simon. Here the resistance of the Jews was so stubborn and so effective that the Romans were disconcerted. The besieged by this time had provided themselves with a full supply of military engines. They had three hundred

catapults for throwing darts and forty ballistas for hurling stones. By practice they had now gained the skill in the management of these engines which they lacked at the beginning, and they used them with deadly effect upon the soldiers who were building the mounds.

Meanwhile, Titus did not cease his efforts to bring about a surrender of the city. He commissioned Josephus, once of high rank and great influence among the Jewish people, to open negotiations with his countrymen. But this man, who was now branded as a renegade by all who opposed the Roman yoke, found it difficult to get a hearing, inasmuch as he had to choose a position beyond the reach of the darts, which were quite as ready to drink his blood as that of the Romans. From a safe distance he addressed them in a long discourse, pleading with them to spare themselves, their country and their beloved temple from the destruction which even their enemies were loath to inflict. He reminded them of the great power of the Romans, and insisted on the utter uselessness and folly of attempting to break away from their yoke. What shame could there be in submitting to those who were masters of the world? God, he said, had fixed the government of the world in Italy; why should they hesitate to accept it? He assured them that the famished condition of Jerusalem was well known to the Romans, and, though it was the people who were now suffering,

the turn of the garrison was certain to come; and how could it contend successfully with such an enemy as famine?

Josephus did not hesitate to commend the Roman soldiers as naturally mild, and as preferring to spare rather than to destroy their enemies; on which account, he said, the commander now offered them his hand as security for their lives if they would surrender. If he took the city by force he could save none of them.

All this was said amid jeers and reproaches, as well as darts thrown from the company on the walls. Not desisting, but changing the tone of his argument, Josephus went on at great length to argue from the past history of the nation that the victories of the Jews over their enemies were never won by fighting, but rather by divine interposition in their behalf. The very ground on which the Romans were now encamped was called the "Assyrian camp," in memory of the Assyrians under Sennacherib, a detachment of whom occupied the same locality nearly eight hundred years before. These with Sennacherib's whole army were slain, not by the Jews in battle, but by the angel of the Lord; and what right had they to expect such interposition now, steeped as they were in crime and violence, guilty of unheard-of disorders, not only against each other, but of polluting the temple itself by their impiety? Could Hezekiah have hoped for such deliverance if he had lifted in

prayer hands stained like theirs? "And are not the Romans as much better than the Assyrians as you are worse than your forefathers? Why hope for vengeance upon *them* in answer to *your* prayers?"

Josephus even asserted that God had wrought a miracle in favor of the Romans; the Fountain of Siloam and all the other springs outside of the city had gone almost wholly dry while under the power of the Jews, but now, under the Romans, they flowed in great abundance, not only for man and beast, but also for purposes of irrigation. God evidently, he inferred, had fled from his sanctuary, and had espoused the cause of their enemies.

"Take warning while there yet is time," he cried. "Cast away your arms. Have pity upon your country, going to ruin. Oh, who can bear the heavy responsibility of the burning of yonder temple? Who can be willing that all these things shall utterly cease to be? Senseless creatures, more stupid than the stones themselves! But if you care not for these things, yet have pity upon wives and children and parents, pining away with famine. My own relatives in the city—my wife, my mother and that whole ancient and honorable family of ours—are suffering under these calamities; yet it is not for their sakes that I plead. Take their lives if you choose; take mine too; I would give it cheerfully if by that means I could bring you to a sound mind and preserve you from destruction."

Little heed was given to this address by the Zealots and the Idumeans, who controlled the city. They could only be more incensed against its author, whom they already hated and despised. One can scarcely believe that, delivered under such great disadvantages, the address could have produced any effect proportioned to its length and earnestness. Yet it is doubtless true that many of the people would gladly have heard of the favorable disposition of the Romans, and some inkling of the nature of Josephus' mission must have been carried by rumor throughout the city. All who thought of deserting to the Romans were stimulated to make the attempt. Those who had property sold it for any trifle it would bring, and, swallowing the gold in order to secure it against the robbers, fled through the lines to the Romans, where they managed to unload the precious burden. Titus allowed them to go into the country wherever they pleased.

All this was done in spite of the closest watching on the part of John and Simon. Even a slight suspicion that any one was about to fly the city brought upon him the vengeance of these miscreants; and as for the rich, such intentions were charged upon them, whether justly or not, as a pretext, so that they might be put to death and their property be seized by the robbers who governed the city.

And now, before two months of the siege had gone by, all the horrors of famine developed them-

selves in the crowded and wretchedly-provided city. Bad enough in itself, this destitution was made trebly horrible by the outrageous conduct of the robbers. They searched private houses and forcibly took away such provisions as they discovered, and put those to the torture whom they suspected of concealing any. In these searches they were guided by the looks of the occupants of the houses. To be in good bodily condition was proof that one was well supplied with provisions; his house was ransacked, while the homes of the pale and the emaciated were left unvisited.

Many willingly exchanged all that they had for a single measure of grain—the wealthy for wheat, the poor for barley. Then, retiring to the remotest parts of the house, without pretending to lay a table or observe the form of a meal, they would devour the grain—some without grinding it; others snatched the bread, half baked, from the fire and ate it in haste and fear of interruption. All decency, all pity, all humanity, disappears from those on the verge of starvation. Children would snatch morsels from the teeth of their parents, and parents from their children. The starving little ones, cleaving tightly to their food, would be violently shaken and dashed to the ground. Was a house noticed shut up close, it was a sign to those outside that the occupants had procured food. Whereupon, rendered savage from hunger, they would burst open the house and rush upon those who were eat-

ing, and with violence seize the pieces, almost plucking them out of their throats. And if they had already been swallowed, in their disappointment and rage they would inflict punishment too dreadful to be described.

It was an aggravation of these horrors that the robbers and Zealots often plundered from others who were on the point of starving, when they themselves had enough, merely to provide for the future. They would even waylay the poor wretches who stole out from the walls by night to gather wild herbs near the Roman lines, and snatch from them as they returned the pitiful handfuls of leaves and roots which they had gathered at the risk of their lives. And if the poor creatures adjured them in the name of Heaven to spare them but a morsel, they had reason to be thankful if they were let off with their lives.

Such was the treatment of the poorer classes. The richer were dealt with in a more formal way, but not less thoroughly. They were accused of treasonable plots; they were condemned on the testimony of hired perjurers. Those that were despoiled by John were handed over to Simon; the victims of Simon, in return for this courtesy, were presented to John; so that these two tyrants shared in the destruction of the bodies and in draining the life-blood of the citizens. In ambition these men were deadly enemies; in crimes upon the citizens they were friendly rivals.

It seemed to be a point of honor with them to share with each other the results of their barbarities. Josephus, as if apologizing for his people, calls these tyrants and their bands "the scum, the slaves and the spurious and abortive offspring of our nation," who had no real concern for its welfare, and who saw with indifference the final destruction of the temple, while even the Romans were moved to tears at the sight. And yet their valorous and obstinate defence of the temple was not unworthy the best days of Jewish history.

And now the policy of Titus toward such of the Jews as were found between the lines underwent a change. An ambush was laid for them as they crept out to gather herbs in the night. Not being deserters, but generally persons caring for their families and relatives in the city, and some of them being soldiers, they resisted, and were carried as prisoners of war to the Roman camp. Here they were treated with the utmost cruelty. They were scourged and tortured, and finally crucified, in full sight of the city. Sometimes as many as five hundred of these miserable beings were caught in a night, and were seen in the morning writhing on crosses before the walls. The Roman soldiers, adding insult to cruelty, nailed the bodies in every variety of position to the wood. At length the number of the victims was so great that space was wanting for the crosses, and crosses wanting for the bodies. Unconsciously, the Romans in their

cruelty were the instruments of a dreadful retribution. The city which had crucified its Messiah was surrounded with the crucified bodies of its citizens. The generation which perpetrated the crime had not passed away before the vengeance was inflicted. The persecutors and murderers of Christ remained in the city and suffered the horrors of the siege; his friends, warned by his prophecies, all made a timely escape and furnished none of the victims. Those who preferred Barabbas, a murderer and seditious robber, to Christ, now found themselves under the control and at the mercy of thousands of Barabbases, the followers of John and of Simon. Those who chose Christ were leavening the world with the preached gospel and preparing the way for the triumph of his kingdom over the emperors and the armies of Rome.

The Zealots made good use of these barbarities of the besiegers. They pointed to them as a proof of the falsity of Josephus' pledges and boastings of the clemency of the Romans. Nothing could be gained by throwing themselves into the hands of so cruel an enemy. Not a few of the citizens who had contemplated deserting were deterred by the grievous spectacle. Yet some, preferring death by the enemy's hands to the horrors of famine, persisted in leaving the city and running the risk of such treatment. Some of them Titus sent back with their hands cut off, bearing messages of

warning to John and to Simon. Titus himself was conspicuous in urging on the siege-works, and as he passed along the mounds the Jewish garrison saluted him with reproaches and vehement declarations that they would sooner die than become slaves. They shouted to him that it was impossible for him to destroy the temple, since God dwelt in it, and would preserve it and would bring all his threats and plots to nothing.

For a time it seemed as if these predictions and boastings would come true. A band of auxiliaries, attired and drilled after the Macedonian method, having joined the Roman forces, their leader, a bold and successful captain, expressed astonishment at what seemed to be the tardy movements of the Romans. Titus smiled at his criticisms and gave him leave to try for himself. With an impetuosity that at first seemed sure of success he and his band assailed the walls, but after a violent struggle they were driven off, nearly every one of them having been wounded.

Toward the end of May the besiegers had completed four embankments against the first wall. Everything was ready for a grand assault; the engines were mounted and the troops waiting the word of command, when suddenly the ground beneath the two mounds opposite Antonia gave way and sank with a fearful crash into a yawning cavern amid a dense cloud of dust and smoke. Out of the cloud broke forth sheets of flame that

soon devoured the whole work of the besiegers, towers, engines and all, until only a heap of charred ruins remained. It was the achievement of John of Giscala, the defender of Antonia. He had completely undermined the embankments of the Romans, and had supported the roofs of his caverns by beams daubed with bitumen, and filled them with combustibles. Just when he saw the preparations of the Romans to be complete, John set fire to the contents of the caverns. As the supports burned and gave way the caverns fell in, the mounds and towers followed, and the work of seventeen days was destroyed perhaps in as many minutes.

Not to be outdone by his rival, Simon and his party organized a sally against the siege-works which had been completed and were in operation against other sections of the wall to the west of Antonia. Three of the most famous and daring of his band led the movement. With lighted torches in their hands, and with the coolness of friends paying a visit, under a shower of darts they passed across the intervening lines and set fire to the Roman engines. As the Romans rushed to put out the fires and to save their works, the Jews fought them from the walls, while others seized the engines and held them in the flames till the iron was red hot. As the fire continued to spread, the Romans despaired of saving their works, and withdrew from the trenches. Then the Jews

poured out of the city in great numbers, followed up the retreating Romans to the very defences of their camp, and fought hand to hand with the guards.

The battle was going against the Romans when Titus, who had been examining the ground for new works in place of those destroyed before Antonia, hurried back and fell upon the flank of the Jews with a chosen body of troops. Instead of breaking and running in disorder, as they had often done before, the Jews faced about and boldly resisted these new enemies, until, amid the dust and confusion and clamor, they made good their retreat into the city, leaving the Romans cast down and discouraged at the result. They had lost all their works, both in front of Antonia and before the western line of the wall. Timber to raise more mounds could be had with difficulty in a country never heavily wooded and now stripped nearly bare. The hope of taking the city by those methods so familiar to a Roman army had to be abandoned.

Titus summoned a council of war. Of the discussion which followed we have the speech of Titus fully reported by Josephus. He dismissed the proposal to make an assault with the whole force of his army, as well as that to repair the ruined works and to go on as before, but proposed instead the immense task of surrounding the entire city with a trench and wall, so as to prevent all

ingress and egress, and thus reduce the place by the slower method of starvation. To the objection that so much time would be consumed by this method as to rob the victory of all glory, he answered that when the enemy had grown weaker through famine he would make trial of the mounds once more, and thus shorten the siege. The arguments of Titus prevailed with the commanders, and his plan was adopted.

As one half of the space occupied by the city was already in the hands of the Romans, the work of circumvallation was proportionally less, but even with this reduction five miles of wall had to be built in order completely to engirdle the city. One might well have expected the soldiers, in their rather dispirited condition, to have gone reluctantly to their work, only mechanically obeying orders, as every soldier is bound to do. But instead of complaining or hesitating, they flew to the work with an eagerness which Josephus, who was an eye-witness, calls a sort of divine fury, each legion and each cohort vying with the others in the zeal and rapidity with which it completed its allotted portion, so that in the incredibly short time of three days the whole work was finished, including thirteen garrison-towers.

Thus the prophecies of Christ in regard to the destruction of Jerusalem were meeting a literal fulfillment. This great siege-work and its calam-

itious results he foresaw and distinctly foretold: "For the days shall come that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side." * All hope of escape and all opportunity of leaving the city being now cut off, the instant result was greatly to aggravate the horrors of famine among the besieged. Whole families lay dying at once; the aged perished in the lanes, where their bodies remained unburied; the children and the young men wandered about like shadows. Some who tried to bury their friends died in the act; others crept into their own coffins and died there. No tears were shed, no lamentations were heard. The famished survivors looked upon the bodies of the dead with no power of feeling aught except envy of those who had gone to rest before them.

The silence of night hung perpetually over the city, except when broken by robbers forcing their way into houses occupied only by the dead bodies of the inhabitants to strip them of their valuables. For a time the soldiers undertook to bury these abandoned corpses; at length, weary of the work, they flung them over the city-walls. There Titus, as he went the rounds, beheld them lying and decaying. Feeling doubtless some compunction over the spectacle, he groaned and lifted his hands to heaven, calling God to witness that this was not his doing. The Roman camp mean-

* Luke xix. 43.

while was abundantly supplied with provisions, timber was brought from a distance, and the siege-works were recommenced against Antonia in four different places.

With the progress of their miseries the crimes of the Jews seemed to increase. They put to death Matthias, the high priest, on the charge of secretly corresponding with the Romans. With him also his three sons were executed, the entreaty of the old man that he might be put to death first being denied him. At the same time another company of prominent citizens, including the secretary and fifteen members of the Sanhedrim, were massacred, all in full sight of the Romans. The father of Josephus was thrown into prison and strictly confined.

Josephus himself, venturing too near the walls, was knocked senseless by a stone. A rush was made by the Jews for his body, but the Romans managed to draw it back to their lines. The garrison of a tower, consisting of eleven men, offered to surrender it to the Romans. While the Romans, who had been so often deceived by such offers, hesitated, the plot was discovered; the whole garrison was slain in sight of the Romans and their bodies were tossed over the walls.

However, in the wretched condition of the people it was impossible to prevent desertions. Some leaped from the walls and ran for their lives to the Romans. Others went out armed, as if to fight,

but passed over immediately to the enemy. Here, too, many came to a miserable end. In their eagerness for food some over-ate themselves in the abundance which prevailed in the Roman camp, and died. The fact that many of these had swallowed their gold before leaving the city having become known to the Romans, the wild Arab and Syrian auxiliaries seized the deserters and cut open their bodies to obtain the gold. It is stated by Josephus that as many as two thousand of these deserters were thus dissected in a single night. The practice continued even after it had been discovered and forbidden with fearful threats by Titus, who, however, does not appear to have punished any of the guilty parties.

The necessities of the siege led John, who occupied the temple, to appropriate its treasures and stores in a way that seemed in the highest degree sacrilegious. He seized the sacred vessels and utensils used in public service and melted them down; he emptied the oil and the wine kept for libations and distributed them among his starving followers. So daring an act of impiety shocked the religious sensibilities of heathens, yet in reality it could not be worse than the many acts of violence and blood with which the inner courts of the temple had been desecrated. In a righteous cause it would have been worthy to be classed with the eating of the sacred shew-bread by David and his famished followers in their flight from Saul.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM.

THE courage and obstinacy of the fighting-men appeared unwavering amid the daily increasing miseries of the besieged. The people died in vast numbers. A deserter who had been in charge of the burial arrangements at one gate gave the Romans some startling, if not actually incredible, figures of his work. From the opening of the siege at the Passover until the first of July, two months and a half, he said one hundred and fifteen thousand eight hundred and eighty bodies had been buried at the public expense or thrown over the walls, besides those buried by their friends. Other authorities put the total of deaths among the poorer people at six hundred thousand. Dead bodies lay everywhere, and the soldiers made their way to the walls trampling over piles of dead with the indifference which familiarity with scenes of war engenders.

The besiegers pushed their preparations with unabated vigor. The country for nearly twelve miles around was stripped of trees and reduced from fertility to a desert to furnish them timber. In three

weeks from the time of their late disasters the direful towers and engines were in place before the walls, and ready once more to exercise their tremendous powers. An attempt was made by the Jews to burn them. Had it been successful, the embarrassment of the Romans would have been very great from the total want of timber to supply their places. But the usual courage and fury of the Jews on such occasions failed, and Roman coolness and experience easily repelled the attack. The Jews retired discomfited, and the engines began to thunder against the walls.

The assailants, advancing from every direction to the very foundations, under the protection of their closely-locked shields, and in spite of the heavy missiles cast upon them, loosened and drew out four large stones from the wall. During the night the wall fell with a great noise. But when the besiegers in the morning prepared to rush in at the breach, behold, a second wall standing behind the first, which John, with true military foresight, had prepared for just such an emergency. But it did not arrest the progress of the Romans long. Two days afterward, on the 5th of July at midnight, twenty soldiers of the guard, with a standard-bearer and a trumpeter, mounted the wall unperceived by the Jews, slew the watch and bade the trumpeter to blow with all his might. The remaining sentinels struck with panic, turned and fled. Titus, on hearing the trumpet, roused his men, and without diffi-

culty mounted the walls and gained possession of the great citadel of Antonia.

This brought him on a level with the temple itself. Immediately a desperate struggle arose at the entrance to the temple. The panic-stricken Jews now rallied again. John and Simon united all their forces in a furious effort to drive the Romans out. Multitudes fell in the conflict. The narrow passage-ways were blocked up with dead, so that the combatants had to climb over the corpses to get at each other. The struggle raged for ten hours, when the Roman officers recalled their men and established themselves in the barracks of Antonia.

But a centurion named Julian, disregarding the orders of Titus, sprang forward and single-handed charged the Jews with such vehemence that they fled before him on every side. He forced his way out of Antonia into the outer court of the temple, up the sixteen steps into a corner of the inner court, driving the Jews before him in terror. At length his nail-clad shoes slipped, and with a great clatter of his brazen armor upon the smooth stone pavement he fell. In an instant the frightened fugitives rallied and turned upon him. The Romans, who had witnessed his exploits with breathless interest from Antonia, cried out in terror as they saw his fall. The Jews answered with a shout of exultation, and after a prolonged struggle, in which many were wounded, succeeded in killing

this champion of Rome in full sight of Titus and the army, who could do nothing for his rescue.

Titus now gave orders that so much of Antonia should be destroyed as would make it easy of approach to the remainder of his army, so that all might be encamped upon the site. Then, learning that the all-important daily sacrifice had ceased in the temple from lack of men to offer it, Titus seized upon it as a good opportunity once more to expostulate with the Jews for prolonging the struggle and risking the utter destruction of their city and overthrow of their religious rites. He accordingly called upon Josephus, and through him sent a message to John, who still had control of the temple, inviting him to come out and fight in some other place, where the result would not expose the city or the temple to destruction.

Josephus carried the message, and added many persuasive words of his own, speaking in Hebrew, which was the ordinary language of the people. He entreated those who heard him to spare their own city and to prevent the flames from devouring the temple itself. John answered Josephus with curses and imprecations, but great sadness and silence fell upon the people. Continuing his address at some length, Josephus seemed quite overcome at the thought that, after all, he was contending against a destiny surely pointed out by prophecy, and which these violent men in their blindness were fulfilling. Groans, tears and sobs

choked his utterance, so that even the Romans were moved at his evident affliction.

All persuasions and threats were in vain. A foolish thing indeed it would have been for John, if he intended to maintain the conflict, to give up his immense advantage in the possession of the temple. Nor can we suppose a shrewd general like Titus to have been animated wholly by religious scruples in his proposal to withdraw the conflict from those sacred precincts. Could he have met the Jews on the open field, he well knew that he would have had short work in annihilating them.

The struggle to carry the entrance to the temple from Antonia was at once renewed. Only a single narrow passage-way connected the two buildings. An attempt was made by the Romans at night, in the hope that the weary guards would be found asleep. In this, however, they were disappointed; the guards were on the alert and the whole garrison responded to the alarm. Eight hours of desperate struggle ensued. In the darkness many Jews fell by the hands of their own men, who mistook them for Romans. But the daylight gave the Romans no advantage. The garrison stubbornly maintained its ground, and remained master of the situation at the end of the conflict.

Seven days had now passed since the capture of Antonia. The Romans abandoned the attempt to

make their way into the temple by assault, and took the slower method of filling up the depression between the two buildings and raising their accustomed mounds and siege-works directly against the temple-wall. For these the materials had to be brought a distance of over twelve miles. From Bethel on the north to Bethlehem on the south, from near Jericho on the east to Bethshemesh on the west, the scouting-parties of Titus must have extended their raids in search of materials. Frequently the Jews waylaid and captured the horses of these parties let loose to graze. To make a diversion from the temple they organized a furious attack on the camp of the tenth legion on Mount Olivet. They chose sunset as the time, perhaps hoping to surprise the soldiers at their evening meal. But the Romans were ready for them, and the Jews were driven back to the walls after a protracted struggle. A Roman knight of prodigious strength while pursuing the retreating Jews bent down from his saddle and seized a young soldier from the crowd of fugitives by the ankle, and, lifting him up, carried him thus as a prize into camp, where he laid him at the feet of Titus. The strength of the knight's right hand and his skill in horsemanship were greatly admired by the general; the poor captive was put to death, and the siege was pressed with renewed vigor.

The Jews beheld the advance of the powerful siege-works with alarm. In order more completely

to isolate Antonia from the temple itself, they set fire to the lofty and magnificent cloisters which bordered the temple-area. The Romans, seeming to think a clear space preferable for the working of their engines, joined the Jews in the work of burning, until the whole western and northern cloisters were destroyed by Jew and Roman torches.

At one point the Jews filled the vacant cloisters with dry wood, sulphur and bitumen, and then, feigning to withdraw, led the Romans to plant their ladders in the hope of making an easy entrance into the coveted temple-area. When the ladders were thronged with soldiers in armor the Jews set fire to the cloisters, so that those near the top in a moment were wrapped in flame and stifling smoke. Some threw themselves down with their heavy armor, and were dreadfully maimed or killed outright on the pavement below. Others flung themselves desperately among their enemies. One man promised his friend below his whole fortune if he would stand beneath and catch him as he jumped down. The friend agreed; the soldier jumped and was saved, but the friend who received him was crushed to death under the weight of his panoplied body.

The horrors of the famine once more demand our attention. Even the robbers now began to share in the sufferings of the unarmed multitude. The appearance of the smallest portion of food was

the signal for a struggle. The dearest friends fought with each other for a morsel. The dying were searched, lest some scrap should be hidden about their persons, or lest the living should have feigned death to conceal their provisions. The robbers gasped for want, and ran staggering like mad dogs or reeling like drunken men, sometimes in their delirium entering the same house two or three times a day. The most disgusting articles were used as food and sold at high prices. Men chewed the leather of their belts and their sandals, and even tore the dry hides from their shields and devoured them.

More shocking than all, and yet not without parallel in the history of the Israelites as recorded in the Old Testament,* was the case of a woman who was found to have slain, cooked and eaten her own infant child. Her home was beyond Jordan, but she had fled to Jerusalem as a place of refuge during the war. She was of eminent and wealthy family, and on her flight had brought valuable property with her to the city. Early in the siege she had been the victim of the rapacity of the robbers, and nearly every day her house had been invaded by those seeking food. Finally, she was left, with her child, utterly destitute, her last mouthful violently carried off by the famished soldiers. Yet as these robbers again passed by her door they perceived the odor as of cooked flesh.

* 2 Kings vi. 26–29.

Forcing their way into the house, they threatened her with instant death if she did not reveal what she had been feasting on. She coolly replied that she had saved a fine portion for them, and with that she lifted the cloth and showed them an appalling sight—the half-devoured remains of her own son. "Come, eat," she said, as the savage men stood speechless with horror; "I have eaten of it myself." Trembling and frightened, they turned away from the sight. The whole city soon rang with the fearful tale. The Roman camp was thrilled with the story, which could scarcely be credited by soldiers familiar to hardness with every form of suffering caused by war—every form but this. Titus himself was aroused to plead his innocence of all responsibility for such an enormous crime; he had made repeated offers of peace to the Jews, and he felt that such a crime ought to be punished with the utter overthrow of the place. Certainly, it was the crowning evidence, if evidence were needed, of the desperate condition to which the people were reduced.

The besiegers were now firmly established upon the temple-area, in the great Court of the Gentiles, and their rams began to batter the division-wall surrounding the inner court. But whether the engines could not be so advantageously placed, whether the temple-walls were actually better able to withstand the rams than the walls of the city, or whether Titus was too eager to wait for the full

effect of their blows, certain it is that after six days' pounding, orders were given to try an assault. But the soldiers could no sooner fill the scaling-ladders from bottom to top with heavily-armed men than the Jews at the top would thrust the ladders back and hurl the whole load down upon the pavement below.

The Romans being again repulsed, with the loss of two standards, Titus applied fire to the gates of the court. He would have preferred to take the temple with as little damage to the structure as possible. But it was clear that to spare his men he must risk the destruction of the building. The gate to which the torch had been applied was of wood covered with silver plate. Not only did this soon yield to the flames, but all the wooden structures around the sides of the court took fire, and the besieged were actually encircled in flames.

On the second day, while the fire was still raging, Titus summoned his generals to a council of war, at which the proper manner of attacking and treating the temple was discussed. Some were for utterly destroying it as a rallying-place of sedition, and as rather a fortress than a sacred place which was deserving of respect and reverence. Others were reluctant to destroy a building so magnificent that if preserved it might be reckoned one of the wonders of the Roman empire, as well as a monument of the forbearance and moderation of the conquerors. This opinion prevailed, and a body

of picked soldiers was detailed to put out the fire and prepare for a general attack on the next day.

The next day was the 10th of August, the anniversary of the total destruction of the first temple after the conquest by Nebuchadnezzar six centuries and a half before. A long and doubtful struggle had been waged for the possession of the inner courts. The Jews still had the advantage of their enemies, when Titus toward evening ordered a cessation of the conflict for that day.

It was the last day of the existence of the temple. For a brief interval the clamor of battle ceased around its courts and a hush fell upon the holy precincts. The white marble walls, the gilded roofs and pinnacles, the lofty gateways with their precious adornments, glowed with all their wonted beauty in the fading light of the summer evening. A thin line of smoke ascended into the air from the edge of the inner court. At another time it might have been taken for the smoke of the evening sacrifice, but for weeks that had ceased to be offered. It was a part of the cloisters that was still burning.

The Roman sentry who paced before the entrenched camp on the brow of Olivet once more paused to send an admiring glance toward that pile of buildings which so gloriously dominated the landscape. Within, the Jew beheld in those courts and gates and walls the memorials of a

thousand years of history; the memories of Solomon, of Zerubbabel, of Cyrus and of Herod were enshrined in its marble, its brass and its gold. Of all places on the earth, the true God had chosen it for his dwelling-place. There how many generations, since David bought the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, had seen in the bleeding victim and the smoking altar the symbols of a great sacrifice, the type of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world! Upon those pavements but lately had rested the feet of the Messiah himself, and had added such honors to the site that no spot of ground on earth, not Eden nor Bethel nor Sinai, could compare in glory to the temple, which had now reached its latest hour. Jewish devotion and Roman watchfulness in vain strove to save it.

The defenders of the temple, not satisfied with the successes of the day just passed and the withdrawal of the Roman forces from the gates, after a short interval rushed down from the inner court and fell upon the Romans, who were resting on their arms. In the struggle which ensued the Jews were not only beaten and driven back, but the Romans in the pursuit forced their way within the gates, and found themselves masters of the inner court. Here a soldier seized a firebrand from the burning cloisters, and, mounting the shoulders of a comrade, thrust it into a window communicating with the inner court of all, or Court of the Priests. In an instant the adja-

cent building, which must have been but a few feet from the Holy of Holies, was in flames, and the alarm was sounded that the temple was on fire.

In dismay, Titus rushed out of Antonia, followed by all his generals and the whole army. With all speed they hastened to the scene of action. Titus himself with stentorian voice and vehement gestures commanded the soldiers to put out the fire. But they either did not or would not hear. A wild scene of confusion prevailed. The Roman legions broke their ranks, and rushed in disorder up the steps that led to the courts which had so long baffled their assaults. Not only curiosity, but a greed for plunder excited by the tales of enormous wealth concealed in the temple treasury, urged them on. The forces of John were slaughtered in heaps. No spot of the pavement was visible through the heaps of dead bodies, and blood flowed in such streams as actually to quench the smouldering fires.

Finding his soldiers reduced to an uncontrollable mob, Titus followed the current and ascended to the highest point, where stood the Holy of Holies, as yet untouched by the flames. He penetrated its sacred recesses and satisfied himself of the justness of its high repute. More anxiously than ever he appealed to the soldiers at least to save the inner shrine, the Holy of holies, which was still unharmed amid the general devastation.

But it was all in vain. Amid the darkness and confusion every one did as he pleased. The soldiers, excited with the profusion of gold and silver ornaments around them, thought themselves in a mine of incalculable wealth. Fire and plunder, revenge and the torch, naturally go together.

While Titus was ordering a centurion and a spearman who were attending him to restrain the refractory soldiers and to beat them with their staves, a flaming torch was thrust into the crack of a door at the entrance to the Holy of holies, and soon the whole structure burst into an uncontrollable flame. The work was done! Titus, discomfited, retired from the scene and left the deluge of fire and slaughter to take its own course. All powers of description are beggared by this last crowning catastrophe of the whole war. The Roman soldiers let loose the whole pent-up fury of long-baffled but now victorious rage. Lighted by the flames of an enormous conflagration, they pursued their work of plunder and of slaughter unhindered by the night. The whole hill blazed like a volcano. Above the roar of the flames could be heard the groans and wild outcries of the temple-defenders and of the crowd of fugitives, who had taken refuge within the courts. Blended with these came answering cries of terror and lamentation from the crowds who witnessed the awful catastrophe from the heights of Zion and the upper city. Those whose throats were parch-

ed and mouths almost closed by famine found strength for groans and outcries for a calamity far worse than their own sufferings.

The air was filled with the vehement sorrow of a whole city deploring its doom. The roar of a mighty conflagration and the fierce shouts of the Roman soldiers added to the tumult, which was echoed back from Olivet and from all the neighboring hills. One after another, the various buildings fell in with a crash. In sheer desperation a band of priests mounted the temple-roof and wrenched off the gilded pinnacles, which they flung upon the heads of the soldiers below.

But all serious attempts at defence had been abandoned. The struggle had become a brutal slaughter of helpless victims. No distinction was made between those who resisted and those who surrendered, between soldiers and unarmed citizens, men and women and children, between priests and people. A crowd of citizens who had given ear to the promises of false prophets, that if they would betake themselves to the temple, God would there provide a miraculous deliverance, were cooped up with the combatants to the number of six thousand, and between the burning cloisters and the daggers of the Romans every one of them came to a miserable end. Ten thousand of the garrison also perished on that memorable night. The leader and a few of his men cut their way through and escaped into the upper city.

Thus perished the second temple as built by Zerubbabel and as rebuilt by Herod. Thus were fulfilled to the letter the woes denounced by the Messiah against the city which rejected and crucified him. So passed away the First Dispensation in all its outward paraphernalia. Thirty-seven years before they had lost their whole meaning when the perfect Sacrifice of Calvary was offered and the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. The outward shell of Judaism fell away, so that its true kernel, Christianity, could more fully be revealed. Those who blindly adhered to the husk perished with it. Those who so grossly misunderstood the mission of their nation as to hope for divine, and even miraculous deliverance for Jerusalem after forty years of rejection of Christ, fell victims to their fanaticism under the divinely-appointed instruments of vengeance, the legions of imperial Rome.

CHAPTER XXXV.

CONCLUSION.

FIRE and sword having done their work, the victorious legions brought their ensigns, "the abomination of desolation," into the temple, and planted them upon the eastern side, which looked toward Olivet. As if they were the emblems of idol gods, they offered sacrifices to them, and in the wildness of their enthusiasm they saluted their general as emperor. A number of priests who had escaped the general slaughter were huddled together upon a portion of the temple-wall. A boy half dead with thirst was among them, and he begged of the soldiers permission to come down and slake his thirst. It was granted, when, after drinking what he wished, he filled his vessels, and instead of remaining rushed back, to the surprise of the soldiers, and joined his friends again. Five days afterward the whole company was starved into surrender. When they begged for their lives, Titus sternly replied that the hour of mercy was past, and the starving wretches fell under the swords of their brutal conquerors.

In the upper city, which still held out, there was

a palace of great strength and magnificence—one of the long list of architectural achievements of Herod the Great. There the people of that part of the city had taken refuge, carrying their valuables with them. John and Simon, when driven from the temple, tried to make terms with Titus. The Roman general, weary of fighting such desperate antagonists, promised them their lives, but nothing more, if they would surrender. They replied that they could not formally surrender without violating their oaths, and they asked that they might be permitted to withdraw beyond the Roman wall, taking nothing but their wives and families with them. Titus angrily refused their request, and made public proclamation that hereafter no quarter whatever should be given to deserters or captives, and that the soldiers should burn and plunder every part of the city.

Upon this the forces of John and Simon betook themselves to Herod's palace, and, having first driven back their Roman pursuers, they fell upon the people who had crowded into it, and, according to Josephus, slew the incredible number of eight thousand four hundred of their fellow-citizens and enriched themselves with their property. They hoped, at the worst, to take refuge in the underground passages and caves with which the city abounded, and so escape with their booty. However, they continued their resistance to the Romans, who found it necessary to build mounds and em-

ploy engines and undertake a regular siege against their defences on Mount Zion.

In ten days after the fall of the temple, Titus was ready to open his batteries against the upper city. A party of Idumeans belonging to the forces of Simon now secretly proposed to surrender to the Romans. But Simon detected the plot, threw the leaders into prison and put the defence into more trustworthy hands. Still, many deserted to the Romans, who, weary of killing, and in fact perfectly glutted with blood, contented themselves with selling the fugitives as slaves. A priest named Joshua obtained his life by surrendering some of the treasures of the temple which were in his possession—two candlesticks, tables, goblets and other vessels of gold, besides curtains and priestly robes.

On the seventh day of September the last defence of the Jews was carried by the besiegers, and the whole city was at their mercy. John and Simon fled, and quickly disappeared from the view of their followers. They hastened out of the city by the valley of Siloam, and attempted to force their way through the Roman wall. But, being repulsed, they returned and hid in the underground passages of the upper city.

With shouts of triumph the Romans mounted the walls and spread themselves over the conquered districts. Revenge awakened once more their thirst for blood, and soon the streets and lanes were blocked up with corpses and the sky was

filled with the smoke of burning houses. Titus was amazed when he entered the abandoned works and saw the strength of the towers which had been occupied by John and Simon. He ordered all the rest of the city to be destroyed, but left the three towers standing. The only act of mercy to human beings which marked this carnival of destruction was the opening of the prisons and freeing of those confined by orders of the robber chiefs.

A multitude of captives still remained alive from sheer weariness of the executioners. Titus ordered that no more should be slain except such as were in arms. However, most of the aged and infirm were put to death as useless, while a multitude of the young and vigorous were huddled together in the ruins of the temple until their fate should be determined. To a freed slave of the Roman general, and to a friend of Titus called Fronto, the destiny of the survivors of the fallen city was committed. By their decision those who had been prominent in the rebellion were put to death. A number of the tallest and handsomest youths were chosen to grace the general's triumph in Rome. Of the rest, all above seventeen years of age were sent to Egypt to work in the mines, or were distributed among the provinces to be sacrificed in the amphitheatres as gladiators or in conflict with wild beasts—

"Butchered to make a Roman holiday."

Those under seventeen were sold as slaves.

While these arrangements were in progress no less than eleven thousand of the captives, famished already before their capture, perished from starvation, their cruel guards neglecting to provide for their wants. Some, too, refused food when offered them. Altogether, ninety-seven thousand prisoners were disposed of alive, but the number killed during the siege was more than eleven times as great, being put at one million one hundred thousand. Great as were the Jewish losses in Galilee and other places, they make a comparatively trifling addition to these enormous figures. The grand totals for the war are—killed, 1,356,460; prisoners, 101,700.

As for John and Simon, these once audacious tyrants were hiding underground in terror of discovery by the enemy whom they had so long defied. Forced by hunger, John and his brethren made themselves known to the Romans, and offered to come out and surrender if their lives might be spared. We are surprised to find that Titus consented to spare John, and condemned him to perpetual imprisonment. It was more than a month after this event, toward the end of October, that a ghost-like apparition startled a company of Roman soldiers who were reposing amid the ruins of the temple. The form of a man clothed in purple and white seemed to arise out of the ground. As it stood dignified and silent they were awestruck. But, venturing to approach and encircle it, they de-

manded its name. The answer was: "Send for your general; I will tell my name only to him."

It was Simon, who had worked his way among the underground passages of the temple, and thus made his startling appearance to the soldiers. At the capture of the city he and a number of his friends, including some stonecutters, had entered a subterranean passage, carrying provisions and tools with them, expecting to dig their way out and pass beneath the Roman lines, and so to make their escape. For a considerable distance they made their way without difficulty. But at length the work became toilsome and their progress slow. Their provisions began to fail, and they were finally obliged to give up and return. Simon was kept a prisoner to grace the triumph of Titus, after which, according to the cruel and shameful custom of the Romans, he was scourged and slain.

Titus, having given orders that nothing should be spared of the rebellious city but the three towers, held a review of his victorious army and bestowed rich rewards and promotions upon such as had distinguished themselves by special acts of valor during the war. Then he offered an immense number of oxen as a sacrifice to his gods, and distributed the meat among the soldiers. The feast lasted three days, after which the army was broken up. The tenth legion was retained as a guard at Jerusalem. Titus himself repaired to Cæsarea, where he spent the winter with a portion of his army and

with the spoils and prisoners which he intended should grace his triumph at Rome.

The glory of this triumph was the greater since it was designed to celebrate the joint victories of the emperor and the general, the father and the son, Vespasian and Titus. Its magnificence exceeded the power of the historian to describe. The



GOLDEN CANDLESTICK ON THE ARCH OF TITUS.

most renowned city of the Orient had been captured. The most bitter, obstinate and powerful rebellion had been put down. Enormous spoils, mysterious and precious religious utensils and furniture and myriads of captives had been taken. No wonder that the pageant, always brilliant, was now of extraordinary splendor.

All rare and valuable objects ever possessed by

men seemed to have been gathered together and formed in procession, rivalling in copiousness and splendor the international exhibitions of modern times. All kinds of objects in ivory, silver and gold, in immense numbers, were carried along, or rather flowed by in a continuous stream. Behind these were carried rare embroidered hangings in Babylonian purple, precious stones in the richest settings, great and exquisitely carved statues of the gods made of costly materials. Even the garments of those who carried these objects were made of the richest stuffs — of purple and gold cloth —and adorned with magnificent ornaments.

But the most remarkable parts of the procession were the mimic representations of the captured cities, which were carried along, some of them three and four stories high and constructed with wonderful skill, so that they presented a lively panorama of the whole war. There, says Josephus, were to be seen a happy country laid waste, and entire squadrons of enemies slain; fugitives flying and captives carried away; walls of great height battered down by engines; the strongest fortifications taken, armies pouring into the cities, and every place full of slaughter. Here was the temple in flames; there the burning houses were toppling over and crushing their inmates; there rivers were running between blazing banks and losing themselves in the long and dreary distance. On the top of each of these structures was

seated as a prisoner the commander of the captured city or fortress represented below.

Behind all these, and conspicuous for their sacred



THE TRIUMPHAL ARCH OF TITUS AT ROME.

character and their richness, were the trophies taken from the temple—the golden table for the sacred bread, the seven-branched golden candlestick and

the book of the Law, the parchment scrolls of the Old Testament. On the Arch of Titus, still standing at Rome, may be seen in bas-relief some of the figures of this triumphal procession, among which the group of four carrying on their shoulders the golden candlestick is conspicuous.

These were followed by images of Victory carved out of ivory and gold, which were borne immediately before Vespasian and his sons, Titus and Domitian. These great personages closed the dazzling pageant. Arrived at the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, the whole procession halted until the general of the opposing forces, who had been led as a captive at the wheels of the victor's chariot, could be taken to the Forum and there barbarously scourged and executed. When news was brought back that Rome's great enemy had paid the penalty of his bravery the procession moved on. The death of a distinguished victim could alone complete the pageant. But the distinguished victim in this case was the robber Simon, son of Gioras.

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